

# THE MILITANT

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on workers' rights

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## U.S. shackles and separates five Cuban revolutionaries

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—They were shackled and handcuffed. They were given T-shirts to wear in freezing weather, while their guards were comfortably dressed in winter clothes. Their route to various prisons across the country has been long and circuitous.

These are some of the humiliating conditions under which U.S. authorities are dividing up and transferring five Cuban revolutionaries—Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González—to prisons in five different states.

The Miami Five, as they have come to be known over the last year, were slapped with the harshest possible sentences by a U.S. federal court here in December. They had been convicted last summer on frame-up charges concocted by the FBI, including “conspiracy to commit espionage” for Havana.

With this inhuman treatment, Washington attempted, once again unsuccessfully, to bring the five to their knees. As Fernando González stated, “We will be able to withstand anything.” An international campaign to demand freedom for these political prisoners is under way.

According to various press reports, the five were taken by plane January 29 to At-

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## In Seattle, fired workers speak about their common struggles

BY CECILIA MORIARITY

SEATTLE—Michael Italie, a socialist worker fired for his political views by Goodwill Industries in Miami, won support for his fight during a three-day visit here as part

### Socialist garment worker Michael Italie fights political firing in Miami

of a West Coast speaking tour.

At a meeting attended by more than 40 people February 2, a number of workers involved in union struggles spoke in support of Italie's campaign to win reinstatement to his job as a sewing machine operator.

Juan Serrano, one of 19 workers fired for striking for a union contract at the Washington Beef company in Toppenish last year, said he supports Italie because it is an example of how “we have to stand up and fight and expand our education” through such experiences in the class struggle.

Rogelio Montes, who was part of a year-long strike against Valley Manufactured Housing in Sunnyside last year, said workers can win “when people as a whole fight for better conditions.” Montes is also an organizer for the Western Council of Indus-

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## Millions in Iran denounce threats by U.S. imperialism

### U.S. officials declare aim of toppling Iraqi government

BY CARMEN JAMES

PITTSBURGH—Millions of people demonstrated in cities throughout Iran on February 11 to condemn the U.S. government's threats against their country and show their determination to defend the gains of their revolution, carried out 23 years ago.

The February 1979 Iranian revolution overthrew Shah Reza Pahlevi, head of a royal family kept in power for decades through torture, murder, and intimidation by London and Washington. The shah was the firmest U.S. ally in the Mideast outside of the state of Israel.

By all accounts, this year's commemoration of the revolution's anniversary was the largest in many years, fueled by U.S. president George Bush's January 29 State of the Union speech, where he threatened Iran, Iraq, and north Korea as “an axis of evil.”

Washington stepped up its threats against Iraq February 12 with a speech by Secretary of State Colin Powell before the Senate Budget Committee. “With respect to Iran and with respect to north Korea, there is no plan to start a war with these countries,” he said. “With respect to Iraq, it has long been, for several years now, a policy of the United States government that regime change would be in the best interests of the region, the best interests of the Iraqi people. And we are looking at a variety of options to

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Above, rally of hundreds of thousands in Tehran February 11, the anniversary of the 1979 revolution that toppled the regime of the shah, backed by Washington. At rallies in many cities across Iran, workers, youth, and others mobilized to denounce U.S. government threats against their country.

## Havana book fair celebrates publication of 'From the Escambray to the Congo'

See pages 8–11 for full coverage and book information

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL, ARRIAN HAWKINS, AND YONATAN MOSQUERA

HAVANA—At the Havana International Book Fair, which opened February 7, more than 200 people jammed a meeting hall to participate in a special presentation of the

new Pathfinder title *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*. People stood outside in a hallway, taking turns to get inside.

Both English- and Spanish-language editions of the book-length interview with Cuban revolutionary Víctor Dreke came off the presses just in time for the opening of the fair.

The turnout reflected the intense interest in learning about an important chapter of the Cuban Revolution and gaining insights

into the reasons for and results of Cuba's internationalist missions in Africa.

The 10-day book fair, a major cultural event in Cuba and across Latin America, has drawn record numbers of people. On the first weekend alone, 100,000 people flocked to the San Carlos de la Cabaña fortress overlooking Havana Bay, where the event was held. The fair's popularity is a measure of the thirst for ideas and avid culture of reading among Cuban working people. The enthusiastic, festive atmosphere and massive participation, which exceeded the organizers' expectations, was also a registration of the progress in the campaign that Cuba's revolutionary leadership has been waging

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## Miners demand restoration of black lung benefits in Kentucky

BY TONY LANE

PITTSBURGH—A Kentucky state bill to ease rules for black lung compensation for coal miners has been passed by a vote of 97–0 in the house. The bill, which now goes to the state Senate, is backed by Democratic governor Paul Patton, the architect of legislation in 1996 that slashed to the bone black lung compensation and other workers' compensation benefits.

The legislation has been so effective that only 16 coal miners have qualified for benefits since 1996. Total benefits paid amount to less than \$80,000 a year and the compensation fund has run up a surplus of \$17 million while miners die without receiving assistance.

“Governor Patton and the legislature did not amend the black lung program in 1996,” said United Mine Workers of America presi-

dent Cecil Roberts. “They eliminated the black lung program.” The National Black Lung Association (NBLA) estimates that 1,500 miners die in the United States each year from the disease.

Patton, himself a former coal boss, now admits he “wronged the coal miners of Kentucky.” Hearings and a vote on the new bill are scheduled later this session. In 2000, Republican senator Kate Stine, who is chairperson of the Senate Labor Committee, refused to hear and take a vote on a reformed workers' compensation bill.

Before Patton became governor he made a name for himself as an enemy of the black lung compensation program. In fact, he testified at a Congressional hearing that black lung had been eliminated in “America's small coal mines,” according to the *Louis-*

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## Airport workers in California call protests against anti-immigrant law

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

SAN FRANCISCO—Simultaneous rallies and press conferences will be held on February 19 at the San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose airports to defend workers employed as baggage screeners.

The actions will demand, “Justice for immigrant airport workers, safety for passengers.” They have been called by a coalition of several organizations, including Ser-

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# Protests in Philippines of up to 2,000 oppose U.S. troop deployment

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

"No to U.S. Troops," and "U.S. Imperialists No. 1 Terrorist" were among the placards held by Filipino fishermen, wading chest-deep in water near the U.S. embassy in the capital city of Manila February 7. The fishermen added their voice to those of working people and students who have held almost daily demonstrations against the U.S. intervention. In one of the larger anti-intervention actions, 2,000 students organized a rally at the Polytechnic University in Manila on the same day.

"The return of U.S. troops to a nation with a long history of subjugation by foreign armies has triggered a political uproar in Manila," reported the February 7 *Washington Post*. The protests and wider controversy in Philippine society have been sparked by the deployment of U.S. troops together with soldiers of the Philippine armed forces in an offensive against the Abu Sayyaf organization on the southern island of Basilan. The Bush administration justifies the intervention by claiming that Abu Sayyaf, a relatively small organization that has kidnapped and held for ransom a number of local people and foreign nationals, has links to al Qaeda.

Washington recently offered combat forces to the Philippine government of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who accepted an "advisory" role for up to 650 U.S. GIs. Around 80 special forces troops have already been deployed, divided among 40 units of 120-140 Filipino soldiers. Brig. Gen. Donald Wurster, the forces' overall commander, emphasized that "there is no question that American soldiers will be there where they could become injured or killed if the Philippine element is attacked." The U.S. soldiers, who will fall under the command of U.S. and not Philippine officers, have been officially encouraged to return hostile fire.

Local officials and opposition politicians in the Philippines, a nation of 83 million people, have expressed fears that the offensive could destabilize Mindanao and other majority-Muslim southern islands, and jeopardize

arize a cease-fire with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the largest of the rebel organizations in the south. They also say that the U.S. intervention might increase sympathy for Abu Sayyaf.

MILF leader Shariff Julabbi described the situation as "volatile.... The American soldiers are not our enemies. But we would like them to stay as far away as possible from the places we have troops. Otherwise there will be a confrontation, a clash between their forces and ours." Other MILF leaders have warned that Philippine troops must gain their permission before entering their territory in pursuit of Abu Sayyaf fighters.

## 'Negation of our self-respect'

On February 6, the Supreme Court announced that it would give the government of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo 10 days to justify the presence of U.S. troops. The directive followed an initiative by two lawyers, who argued before the court that the U.S. intervention violates a constitutional ban on the presence of foreign combat troops. "To unleash American GIs...even under the cover of expanding the U.S.-led war against global terror in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, is not only an unmitigated insult against the Filipino soldier but a negation of our self-respect as a people and a mockery of the Philippine constitu-



Fishermen demand withdrawal of U.S. troops from Philippines in February 7 protest

tion," the lawyers told Reuters news agency.

President Arroyo has called opponents of the U.S. intervention "terrorist lovers" and "un-Filipino." On January 26 she stated that another 2,000 U.S. troops may be involved in exercises in Luzon scheduled for later this year. Luzon is the northernmost island where the capital city is located.

"The United States may use its current military deployment in the Philippines to realign its forces towards the region," wrote Miriam Donohoe in the February 8 *Irish Times*. Referring to the U.S. Navy's use of ports in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, and the Philippines, she wrote, "At present Washington has six military hubs in the Asia-Pacific but they are all oriented towards North East Asia where the U.S. forces are positioned for a potential conflict in the Korean peninsula."

Washington is pressuring the Vietnamese government to allow the U.S. Navy access to the Cam Ranh Bay, a sheltered deepwater naval base built by Washington during the Vietnam War, which ended in the expulsion of the U.S. forces and victory for the Vietnamese revolution. A 25-year lease signed by the Vietnamese and Russian governments for use of the facilities is due to expire in 2004. Moscow has said it cannot afford to renew the agreement.

"Analysts said the Bush administration decided to elevate East Asia in U.S. military priorities before the September 11 terrorist attacks because of concerns about the rise of China, a possible Chinese attack on Taiwan, increasing instability in Southeast Asia, and extensive U.S. commercial interests in the region," wrote the *International Herald Tribune*.

# U.S. forces kill, brutalize Afghan civilians

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The persistence of Afghan villagers in Hazar Qadam, located in Oruzgan Province north of Kandahar, has forced the U.S. government to admit that a ferocious midnight attack on the town January 24 that killed 19 people was an error. And now the Pentagon is being exposed for its brutal treatment of 27 others detained in the raid, four of whom reported they were beaten on the head, back, and ribs, some until they lost consciousness.

After the bombing raid, U.S. Special

Forces moved in to arrest the survivors. "I was shouting 'Dost! Dost!'—'We are friends!'—but they [U.S. soldiers] were not listening," stated Abdul Rauf, 60, the police chief in this small mountain town. "American soldiers came and started to beat me. I was down on my knees, bent over, and they kicked me in the chest. I heard my ribs crack. Then I was lying on my side and they kicked me in the back, in the kidneys, and I fainted."

The prisoners, with hands and feet bound, were flown to the U.S. military base in Kandahar. All 27 were roped together and forced to lie face down on the hangar floor with their hands tied behind their backs and their feet chained. For the rest of the night they were subjected to violent blows and kicking. "They were walking on our backs like we were stones," said Rauf.

The next day, Aktar Muhammad, 17, stated he was picked up and thrown to the ground three times by soldiers, until on the third time he fainted from a blow to the head. After being held in a wooden cage, he was placed in solitary confinement in a metal shipping container for eight days where he underwent an "aggressive" interrogation, reported the *New York Times*.

After 16 days of beatings, torture, and interrogation, U.S. authorities, saying they were "sorry" and had "committed a mistake

bombing this place," finally released the 27 Afghans captured in this attack.

"Why did they bomb us? Why did they do this?" stated Rauf. "I can never forgive them." Pentagon officials had at first summarily dismissed statements by the villagers that U.S. forces had attacked and killed people without cause, sticking with their story that they had launched a raid against Taliban or al Qaeda supporters. Once forced to investigate, their claims quickly unraveled.

Since October 7 Washington has dropped some 18,000 bombs, missiles, and other ordnance on Afghanistan, killing thousands of civilians. Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee February 7, Gen. Tom Franks, commander of the U.S. military's Central Command, downplayed these figures, acknowledging that Pentagon officials don't even bother to keep track of civilian casualties in Afghanistan. The general insisted that the high casualty reports come from Taliban sympathizers who "do not share the same value of human life that we share in this country."

The price that Washington places on human life in Afghanistan—even when faced with international exposure in killing villagers in Hazar Qadam—was made known when the CIA quietly made payments to the families of the dead. The compensation? \$1,000.

## THE MILITANT

### Black lung: disease of capitalism

The widows of miners who have died of black lung disease are preparing to lead a march to demand cleaner working conditions and benefits for the sick. The action helps expose the responsibility of the bosses and their politicians for this deadly disease's toll. The *'Militant'* covers this fight. Don't miss a single issue.



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# Federal budget proposals target social wage

BY JACK WILLEY  
AND MAURICE WILLIAMS

President George Bush's proposed \$2.13 trillion budget, sent to Congress February 4, opens a new round in the bipartisan assault on the social wage and rights of working people. The budget projects attacks on government-funded entitlements, including Social Security and Medicare, and a substantial increase in funding to beef up police agencies and spying, euphemistically called "homeland" defense.

The administration's budget plan includes taking \$1.5 trillion over the next decade from payroll taxes that the government claims are earmarked for Social Security for the elderly. This move has reopened the discussion among big-business politicians over whether the government will pay for Social Security in the future. Both Democratic and Republican politicians pedal the false notion that Social Security funds are separate from the rest of the budget and risk going "bankrupt." Social Security benefits—won as a by-product of the mass social movement that formed the industrial trade unions in the 1930s and expanded under the weight of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s—is an entitlement considered by working people to be a right.

Although several politicians have bickered over aspects of the budget, nobody has proposed waging a campaign to vote against it or to put forward a competing plan. The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon have become a catchall excuse for cutting into the social wage.

Sen. Kent Conrad, a Democrat who heads the Budget Committee, called the proposed spending of the payroll taxes a "serious error," then cut to his main point. "I can tell you what we're not going to do," Conrad said. "We're not going to raise taxes in the midst of an economic downturn. And we are going to supply the president with the resources necessary to fight this war."

Peter Domenici, the ranking Republican in the Budget Committee, claimed that Republicans had earlier pledged to protect the Social Security "lock box," but "that pales now in comparison with the challenges brought about by September 11."

## Cuts in Medicare

The president's budget plan includes cuts in Medicare, which provides medical insurance for the elderly. This comes five years after the Balanced Budget Act, enacted under the Clinton administration, projected slashing spending for Medicare by \$115 billion by 2003. The cuts already total \$200 billion, accelerating the decline in medical care provided for retirees.

Over the last 13 months, more than 2 million people across the country have lost their health insurance. Conservative estimates put the number of people who have no medical

care—including poor quality Medicaid and Medicare insurance—at more than 40 million. Dr. Henry Simmons, president of the National Coalition on Health Care, estimates that as many as 6 million people will be added to the ranks of the uninsured by the end of the year, as states cut Medicaid reimbursement and federal budget increases for Medicare continue to lag behind inflation.

Nationwide, teaching hospitals stand to lose \$708 million annually, according to hospital administrators. These facilities often provide care for working-class patients who would otherwise have no access to such services.

Funding for public housing would also go on the chopping block. The plan projects a 6 percent cut, and the public housing capital fund, used to pay for repairs, would be reduced by nearly 15 percent. Local housing officials admit that tens of thousands of public housing units are already dilapidated and in need of major repairs. The actual figure is substantially higher.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which covers a portion of heating bills, would face a 15 percent cut.

The Mine Safety and Health Administration, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration all face 2 percent to 10 percent cuts. These agencies already have minimal powers to enforce minimum wage laws and occupation safety and other regulations and often take the side of bosses on these issues.

Meanwhile, Congress last year voted to gradually repeal by 2011 the tax on estates worth more than \$1 million. This was part of a broader tax cut that returned a paltry few hundred dollars in taxes to most working people.

## Billions for 'homeland security'

While programs that benefit workers are slashed, a number of "security" firms stand to rake in big money from the \$38 billion homeland security budget. Vance International Inc., an antilabor outfit, is among the 13,000 companies jostling for positions at the feeding trough. "Everybody is working on figuring out how they can fit into the program," president and CEO Charles Vance, a former Secret Service agent, told the *Wall Street Journal*. "There will be plenty to go around," he added.

Vance's payroll includes former FBI and Secret Service agents and former cops from police departments across the United States. Goons hired by Vance Security have been used as part of strikebreaking tactics by bosses facing resistance from workers. Last year a strike by newspaper workers at the *Seattle Times* were among a number of labor battles where bosses hired Vance Security thugs.

Bush's budget proposals also include an increase of \$1.2 billion to the Immigration

and Naturalization Service (INS) to double the number of border patrol cops, add more spy planes, and develop a computer system to monitor the movements of the 330 million noncitizens who enter the United States each year. A computerized tracking system to check on foreign students was approved by Congress six years ago.

The INS has already set up a bureau that will oversee border patrols, investigations, and spying operations in a projected crackdown on an estimated 3 million immigrants who have expired visas. A memo obtained by the *Washington Post* revealed that the Justice Department has set up a database that includes information gathered from recent interviews of thousands of Middle Eastern men who were pressed to undergo interrogations by federal agents as part of Washington's antiterror campaign.

According to the *Post*, the INS has compiled a list targeting some 314,000 "foreign nationals" who have ignored court orders to leave the country. Federal cops will begin another round of interrogating and ap-

prehending Middle Eastern immigrants who don't have legal documents. FBI and other Justice Department officials said arrests would begin soon of some 1,000 noncitizens from the Middle East and Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the Customs Service will receive an additional \$619 million for more agents and upgraded equipment to tighten border restrictions. And the U.S. Coast Guard will get \$282 million of "homeland security funds," which would be its largest annual budget increase in history. Coast Guard officials commented that some of the funds would be used for maritime SWAT teams and sea marshals.

Bush's proposed \$379 billion military budget includes an increase of more than \$48 billion that "is already drawing support from congressional leaders of both parties eager to back spending on national security," the *Wall Street Journal* reported February 5. Some \$10 billion of the additional funds is also being proposed by Bush to be put into a "reserve fund" as a way to bypass Congressional approval of spending for future military assaults.

## 1,000 rally in San Francisco to back teachers' contract fight



Militant/Bill Kalman

Faculty members, students, and supporters rallied at the Marriott Hotel February 9.

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Close to 1,000 members of the California Faculty Association (CFA), college students, and labor allies rallied in front of the Marriott Hotel here February 9 to demand a decent contract for state university faculty.

The occasion of the action was an address by Charles Reed, chancellor of the California State University (CSU) system, before a meeting of the American Council of Education. The event was held at the Marriott, a hotel that has refused to bargain with Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 2. Hotel workers voted in the union in 1996 and still have no contract. HERE cosponsored the rally with the CFA. Rally participants carried signs that read "Stop the rip-offs!"

The CFA represents 22,000 professors, lecturers, librarians, counselors, and coaches on the 22 campuses of the state university system. California state schools enroll more than 370,000 full and part-time students.

CFA president Susan Meisenhelder, an English professor at Cal State San Bernardino, said in a press release, "We find it distressingly characteristic that Charles Reed will be speaking at a nonunion hotel, site of the longest-running labor dispute in San Francisco. This is all of a piece with his disrespect for faculty, his anti-working family attitude, and his seeming disregard for the quality of education of students."

The CFA has requested a strike authorization vote this spring because of stalled contract negotiations. The CFA's contract with the CSU expired last July, and talks are at a formal impasse. Faculty members are seeking a 6.3 percent wage increase, but state legislators have only budgeted 2 percent.

Besides demanding adequate wage increases for faculty members at CSU, the CFA is fighting against the growing practice of the state system to hire faculty on a temporary basis. These lecturers are denied many of the

rights that tenure-track faculty have and are "underpaid and overworked," an editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted.

The CFA organized teach-ins on their campuses last October in order to get support from their students. Eleven students from the Cal State San Diego MECHA chapter attended the rally; more than 60 students from Sonoma came as well. Joel Flores, a student at Cal State Long Beach who came with 15 students and five teachers, told the *Militant*, "If the teachers don't get a fair contract, the students won't get the education we need." Flores said that about 50 CSU students met last week to organize support for the strike.

Also attending the rally were 15 locked out United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) members from the Charles Krug winery in Napa, who distributed leaflets about their fight and lead the crowd in chanting "*Si se puede!*"

Bill Kalman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 120 in San Lorenzo, California.

## Miami protests for justice in police killings

BY LARRY TAYLOR

MIAMI—Small but persistent protests against cop killings of working people here are keeping the heat on the city government over the issue of police brutality. Over the past month, police have gunned down four people and seriously wounded another.

On February 9 two cops unloaded three or four rounds each into a homeless man in Hialeah Gardens. They claim the man charged five officers with a stick that had spikes in the end. The dead man has not been identified.

The latest demonstration, attended by 20 people February 7, was the fourth protest in response to the brutal cop killing of Eddie Lee Macklin, Jr. Rallying at the site of the shooting, the protesters chanted, "No Justice, No Peace!" and carried signs that read "Jail Killer Cops!"

Macklin, unarmed, was killed during the Martin Luther King Day activity here when police officer James Johns jumped on the car he was driving and shot him through the windshield. Officers claimed the car was reported stolen and alleged that Macklin tried to run the officer over when he approached the car. Eyewitnesses report that traffic was bumper to bumper at the time, and that there was no way Macklin could have moved his car to hit the officer.

"The young man was assassinated in the streets of Liberty City," said Paulette Darow, a member of the NAACP. "We demand the

cops responsible to be arrested and get time in jail."

One protester said he had joined a picket line in front of a public meeting where Miami-Dade County mayor Alex Pinellas was speaking a few days earlier. Many young people from the neighborhood joined the dozen or so protesters, he said.

A week earlier, 200 people attended a memorial held in Liberty City across the street from the site of the shooting. Supporters of the fight also organized for church vans to drive people to Macklin's wake in Pompano Beach February 1 and then to the funeral in West Palm Beach the next day.

Twenty people wearing a "Justice for Victims of Police Brutality" T-shirt, which lists all those killed by the cops in Miami, attended the funeral. Representatives of the group addressed those present.

Brian Dennis, of Brothers of the Same Mind, said, "This flag is flying upside down. If we can go on the front lines in Afghanistan, but come back and be treated like we were after WWII, then the war on terrorism is a war against us." Ernestine Worthy, from Liberty City, asked everyone with a flag to fly it upside down for the month of February, Black History Month. "When they treat us right, we'll fly it right."

Larry Taylor is a meat packer. Mary Ann Schmidt, a garment worker, contributed to this article.

## Coming next week...

The *Militant* will be carrying coverage in our next issue of meetings of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee and the New York City membership of the Young Socialists and SWP held February 9–10. The meetings charted a course to accelerate recruitment of workers to the party and building the international communist movement.

# Swedish rulers erode workers' rights with anti-immigrant moves

BY KRISTOFFER SKOGLUND  
AND BJÖRN ANDERSON

GOTHENBURG, Sweden—The Swedish ruling class is deepening its attacks on workers' rights here, especially taking aim at immigrant workers. They have begun using "secret evidence" to speed arrests and deportations and to freeze assets of immigrant organizations.

Egyptian immigrant Ahmed Hussein Agaiza was apprehended by police in Karlstad December 18, the same day Mohammed Zari, another Egyptian seeking asylum in Sweden, was arrested in his home in Stockholm. A few hours later both were placed against their will on an Egyptian government airplane bound for Egypt.

Agaiza and Zari face charges of terrorism and severe prison terms in Egypt, which they fled some 10 years ago. The government decision to extradite them was based on secret testimony by Säpo, the Swedish security police. The arrest and deportation was carried out extremely swiftly, skipping legal procedures. Stockholm claims to have "very clear indications that these individuals had leadership positions in organizations involved with terrorist acts," according to Gun-Britt Andersson, state secretary for development cooperation and migration policy. Andersson, however, did not disclose the evidence.

In justifying the move, Stockholm claims to have received written guarantees from the government of Egypt that Agaiza and Zari "would not be put to death or subjected to torture and that they would receive fair trials," the *Washington Post* reported.

In a similar fashion, the Swedish government carried out Washington's demands to impose sanctions against three Swedish citizens who are originally from Somalia, and Al Barakaat, a banking network through which Somalis working in Sweden and other countries send money to relatives in Somalia.

## Secret evidence

On November 13, Stockholm froze the assets of Abdirisak Aden, Ahmed Yusuf, and Abdulaziz Ali, stating Washington had presented evidence that the three have had connections with and sent money to "terrorists" in Somalia. Stockholm also agreed to keep the evidence secret.

Requests by attorneys Thomas Olsson and Leif Silbersky, who represent the accused, that Washington present the evidence have been turned down. On February 2, U.S. officials agreed to meet with Olsson and Silbersky to discuss the matters.

Organizations and individuals have raised funds to help Aden, Yusuf, and Ali make

ends meet since they cannot withdraw money or receive any social security benefits from local authorities.

These anti-immigrant attacks are being bolstered by a campaign against "foreign cultures" that is gaining steam in the capitalist press.

On January 21, Fadime Sahindal, a young Kurdish woman, was shot to death at her mother's house in Uppsala. Her father has been arrested on murder charges and has confessed to the crime.

Calling the murder an "honor killing," the press began targeting "Kurdish culture" as being backward, patriarchal, and oppressive of women. This asserted backwardness is contrasted to what the Swedish ruling class claims is peaceful, democratic, and civilized society in Sweden, one that defends women's and democratic rights.

For example, Yvonne Hirdman, a professor at the historical institution of Stockholm University, wrote in the opinion page of *Dagens Nyheter*, the country's largest newspaper, that Sweden "has an official gender order that's built upon justice, equality, equal rights and responsibilities.... A culture to audaciously defend and prefer over the gender order that is behind daughter murders. Couldn't we even stand up and defend it,



Protesters mobilized against fascist rally in Sweden last December. Racist, anti-immigrant attacks are bolstered by campaign against "foreign cultures" in capitalist press.

when Fadime gave her life for it?"

Referring to Sahindal's father, the chief district court judge and justice department secretary said that it "is too easy to become a Swedish citizen and too hard to get deported by crime," and urged deportation be made the "chief rule in all harsh crimes" involving immigrants.

The press has played up the fact that Sahindal sought to break with some members of her family who thought that she behaved improperly, for example, by having a Swedish boyfriend.

While putting a blind eye to imperialism's role in drawing wealth from the

semicolonial countries, keeping them underdeveloped, and thereby maintaining the semifudal social and economic relations of the rural family structures, bourgeois columnists claim that a killing like this could never occur in Swedish families and such actions are foreign to Swedish culture.

What is usually not reported in the articles is the fact that every 10 days a Swedish woman is beaten to death by her husband. Nor are government closing of crisis centers for abused women highlighted. One such office in Gothenburg visited by 1,000 women a year was recently closed due to lack of government funding.

## Cop closes communists' literature tables in UK

BY JOYCE FAIRCHILD

LONDON—The Communist League in London has launched a campaign for its right to set up sidewalk literature tables after police twice forced CL members to shut down their stall.

On January 18 and 26 Southwark police, citing obstruction of the walkway under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, closed tables that League members had set up at the Elephant and Castle subway as they had nearly every Saturday for the last five years. The table displayed the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International* and other communist works, along with titles by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Malcolm X, and Thomas Sankara.

On January 18 the police were accompanied by a London Weekend Television Film crew who filmed the stall closure for the "Crimefighters" program, which showed the activities of officer Chris Daley that day. The film was televised during a late-night spot February 8.

During the broadcast Daley is shown ringing his headquarters and explaining his reason for taking the stall down. "They've got some very, very anti-British posters

here," he told his superiors. "I'm closing it down as there's a potential point of conflict I think."

The film showed close-ups of the posters on the stall, including ones that read: "British troops out of Ireland," "Defend Cuba's Socialist Revolution," "Equal Rights for Immigrants," "Israeli Troops Out of the West Bank," and "No to UK-US-UN Colonization of Afghanistan." Another encouraged people to join the Young Socialists.

When Daley closed the stall the second time he reported on his phone that "They've got the same posters about issues in various parts of the world." He also stated in the presence of two witnesses that he did not like our posters.

Communist League members point out they have set up the stall at that location because it is in a workers district and close to the Pathfinder bookshop. The stall has become a regular feature on Saturdays there, and many workers stop by each week to buy the *Militant*, look at the books, and find out the topic of the Militant Labour Forum. This is the first time the police have closed down the stall as an obstruction, CL members said.

In addition to the literature tables and

other activities, the Communist League has stood candidates in the Southwark and Bermondsey constituency in many local, national, and European elections over the last decade.

In a statement issued in response to the closings, the Communist League said the police actions are "a major attack on the right of working people in the Elephant and Castle area to have the opportunity to hear and discuss all points of view. Defending free speech rights is particularly important today, as the rulers' wars and militarization drive are used as an excuse to attack democratic rights and freedom of expression."

Communist League members are building a Militant Labour Forum at the Pathfinder bookshop February 15 entitled, "Defend Workers Rights! Protest the Closure of the Communist League Campaign Stall!"

As well, CL campaigners returned to their usual sales spot the day after the broadcast of the Crimefighters program with the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, forum leaflets, and campaign statements. A few passersby said they had seen the broadcast. One thought that the police had closed it because of the ideas expressed on the signs and books, not because it was an obstruction or for lack of a trading license. Another person who has a regular stall said the Communist League should be allowed to have its stall there and that the police were wrong to take it down.

## Part of broader assault

The police closing of the table takes place in the midst of a wider assault on workers' rights in the United Kingdom. Parliament has approved new "anti-terrorist" legislation that creates offenses relating to inciting and funding terrorism and gives the government powers to detain immigrants without trial.

On January 29 six people accused by authorities of raising funds for militant Muslim groups were arrested after a series of raids. Five young men from Tipton in the West Midlands have been accused of taking up arms for the Taliban.

Two of them, Shafiq Rasul, 24, and Asif Iqbal, 20, were handed over to Washington and taken to the prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Ruhul Ahmed, 20, is being questioned in the Afghan city of Kandahar. Munir Ali and a fifth man from Tipton are believed to be missing in Afghanistan. The government says all five worshipped at the same mosque in the United Kingdom.

Last week Home Secretary David Blunkett began testing the waters for introducing an English language proficiency exam, and an oath of allegiance for those wanting citizenship.

## 'We wanted to help normalize relations with Cuba'

BY JACK PARKER

LAS VEGAS, New Mexico—"We wanted to do something to help normalize relations between the United States and Cuba," said Miguel Angel, describing the group that he helped found. "Baseball is something that is part of the national pastime of both countries. It is a sport that we all participate in."

The decision to set up Peloteros Por La Paz (Baseball Players for Peace) came after Angel and Arnold Trujillo, two community activists from New Mexico, went to Cuba last year. They took two duffel bags full of bats, balls, mitts, hats, and uniforms with them to give to the children of Viñales, a small town on the western part of the island.

"A little three-year-old boy grabbed a bat and started hitting line drives all over the place," Angel said. "You could see why the Cubans are so good at the game."

"In January, we invited José Luis Noa from the Cuban Interests Section in Washington to come to Las Vegas to assess the situation," Angel continued. Noa, who is the director of sports, religion, and sister city issues for the Interests Section, spoke to a meeting of 60 at the Plaza Hotel in downtown Las Vegas.

"Las Vegas is a small town of 18,000 with a lot of history," Angel explained. "Sixty is a very good turnout for us. The mayor and a couple of city council members came. We have been discussing having Las Vegas become a sister city with a similar sized town in Cuba and they wanted to find out more."

Students from World College, established by industrialist Armand Hammer, from Highlands University, and the local junior college attended the meeting.

"A number of Chicanos came from Mora, New Mexico," Angel said, "a very poor town north of Las Vegas with few medical services and no resident physicians. They wanted to get information about Cuba's offer to provide scholarships for 500 doctors to people from oppressed communities in the United States."

"In New Mexico, 33 percent of the Chicano children have no medical care. Similar conditions exist on the Indian reservations where there is a 45 percent unemployment rate and very few social services," Angel explained.

"Cuba has the lowest infant mortality rate in Latin America," Angel continued. "There are more Cuban doctors serving in the underdeveloped world than those from the entire United Nations put together."

"Cuba represents no threat to anybody, much less the United States, the richest, most militarily powerful nation in the world," Angel said. "Cuba is surrounded by water and has never done anything to any of its neighbors."

"We have already collected 200 mitts, eight or nine complete sets of uniforms in red pin stripes, and 100 baseballs in addition to other related equipment," Angel explained. "We began the campaign in earnest on February 1. We are going to contact all of the major league clubs and a number of the big league ball players who we think will be sympathetic to this issue."

Peloteros Por La Paz intends to coordinate the project with its proposed sister city, which is expected to be in the province of Holguin, Cuba.

"If there were normalized relations between our two countries we believe scores of Cubans would be playing in the major leagues in the United States," Angel stated.

"We think we will fill a semi-truck and then we plan to drive it to Vera Cruz, Mexico, where we will load everything on a Cuban freighter," Angel concluded. He put in a pitch for anyone wishing to help and urged them to call 505-454-6771 or 505-454-8928.



# In Seattle, fired workers discuss struggles

Continued from front page  
trial Workers.

Ana Guzmán, involved in the struggle to organize apple packers in Washington, also backed Itale's fight. Guzmán was fired by Washington Fruit for her union activity. Although the National Labor Relations Board ruled she be reinstated, the company is appealing the decision. Apple pickers "have to fight even to be paid the minimum wage," she said. "We have to unite and defend the rights of workers and the right of free speech—or we will lose our jobs," she told the meeting.

Italie, who ran for mayor of Miami on the Socialist Workers Party ticket, was fired October 22 after speaking out against the U.S. war in Afghanistan and in defense of the Cuban Revolution during a televised candidates' debate. Goodwill CEO Dennis Pastrana told the *Miami Herald* that he dismissed Itale because "we cannot have anyone who is attempting to subvert the United States of America" work at the plant.

Goodwill did not contest Itale's filing for unemployment benefits, and the State of Florida Unemployment Compensation Program said in awarding Itale his benefits that the "claimant was discharged because of political views. No information has been submitted which substantiates misconduct." Supporters of workers' rights and Itale's fight have formed the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights, which is sponsoring his nationwide tour.

Nizar Mansour of Voices of Palestine said at the meeting that he was "honored to be here to support Michael Itale. People who stand up will appreciate Itale's fight." Panelist Ahmed Amr, editor of Nile-



Militant/Brendan Mills-McCabe

**Panelists and participants in February 2 public meeting in Seattle that built support for reinstatement of socialist worker Michael Itale, fired for his political views by Goodwill Industries in Miami. Left to right: Rebecca Williamson, Charles McAleese, Ana Guzman, Michael Itale, Rogelio Montes, Ahmed Amr, and Juan Serrano.**

Media.com, spoke in defense of the Palestinians' right to live on their land and of the media's lies and distortions of the truth about the struggles of working people, especially the Palestinians.

Charles McAleese, speaking for Irish Northern Aid in Seattle, noted the 30th anniversary of the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre of 14 Irish freedom fighters by British troops in Derry, Ireland. Comparing the discrimination against Itale by Goodwill with what Catholics face in northern Ireland

under British rule, McAleese said, "Injustice is injustice no matter where it is."

A meeting at Seattle Central Community College (SCCC), sponsored by the University of Washington Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán and the Black Student Union, attracted 15 people. As an example of the importance of defending free speech, Cole Torrence, a member of Students-RiseUp! spoke against the plans of the Washington State legislature to increase tuition fees another 12 percent after an in-

crease of 6 percent the previous year.

Rebecca Williamson, chair of the event and a member of the Young Socialists, pointed out that students in Argentina prevented tuition hikes last year through their protests. "We should see the students in Argentina as our allies," she stated.

At both meetings Itale explained the background to his fight and the importance of defending workers' rights today in order to keep open the space to discuss, organize, and resist.

## Fighting alongside others

He said he has been meeting others who are standing up to victimization by the employers and the government, and pointed to the fight by Dr. Sami Al-Arian, a Palestinian and tenured professor at the University of South Florida who was recently suspended and notified of his impending firing by university officials.

Italie also spoke out against the U.S. government's treatment of prisoners at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba. "Washington's three targets in its brutalization of the prisoners are the prisoners themselves, the Cuban people, and workers in the United States," he said.

Williamson said the SCCC event "was very stimulating and part of an effort to build a national fight in defense of free speech. Meetings like these set an example of what we can do."

More than \$1,700 was raised at the two meetings to cover tour costs and to support the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights.

*Cecelia Moriarity is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers union.*

## Italie gets hearing on Texas campus

BY STEPHANIE TAYLOR

BROWNSVILLE, Texas—The University of Texas here was one of Mike Itale's latest stops in his national tour. The campus, located a few hundred yards from Mexico, is overwhelmingly working class and predominately Chicano and Mexican in composition. Itale had been invited by the Political Science Club on the campus to address a public meeting on his fight.

In the two days leading up to the meeting, supporters of the case set up information tables on the campus and spoke with hundreds of students about the fired garment worker's campaign. Many asked about democratic rights in the United States and whether they applied in the workplace.

A number of students noted the connections to the attacks on immigrant workers, and mentioned experiences that they had with the Border Patrol and the INS in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Others expressed their appreciation to Itale for coming to visit the campus and welcomed the opportunity to discuss questions such as his case, the Cuban Revolution, and his bottomless contempt for U.S. war policy.

Thirty people attended the event, which started off with a brief video presentation showing television coverage in Miami of Itale's case. The fired socialist said Goodwill Industries is a nonprofit organization and therefore cannot participate in any election campaigns, neither endorsing nor opposing candidates, according to IRS regulations.

One of the key points made by Itale at the meeting was how immigrant rights, along with workers' rights, are at the forefront of the struggle of working people today.

Italie struck a chord with the audience when he said he opposed recent federal legislation that bars noncitizens from being employed as baggage inspectors in airports. A fight is under way against this assault in California, where airport screening workers and their union are organizing to prevent this reactionary law's implementation.

A fund appeal by Jacquie Henderson, a supporter of this free speech fight, to "cover legal expenses, print materials, as well as continue the tour in defense of freedom of speech and the Bill of Rights," brought in \$36 from students attending the event.

During the meeting an information table was set up outside. Seven students endorsed the defense effort at the meeting. Another 15 signed the petition defending freedom of speech and the Bill of Rights or volunteered to help in the defense. Twenty people requested more information on the case.

## Forum in Tucson champions civil liberties

BY BETSY MCDONALD

TUCSON, Arizona—Concerned with the government's moves to erode constitutional rights, 110 people attended a forum to defend civil liberties here January 17. The Young Socialists, inspired by the committee that is fighting to overturn the political firing of Miami socialist worker Michael Itale, initiated the event and won co-sponsorship from the Arizona Civil Liberties Union and Derechos Humanos Coalition, a local immigrant rights group.

Attorney Isabel Garcia, cofounder of Derechos Humanos Coalition, chaired the panel of speakers, which included University of Arizona law professor Jean Braucher, president of Arizona Civil Liberties Union; Tom Berning, director of litigation for William E. Morris Institute for Justice in Tucson; Mohyeddin Abdulaziz, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; and Aaron Kappeler, University of Arizona student activist speaking for the Committee to Defend Free Speech and the Bill of Rights.

In opening the program Garcia noted that the previous day the Supreme Court had ruled that Immigration and Naturalization

Service border patrol agents may use any possible circumstance to stop anyone in a car. Sandra Day O'Connor's justification was, "We live in perhaps a more dangerous age today."

Civil liberties are crucial in times of crisis emphasized Jean Braucher. Outlining five ways in which the U.S. Patriot Act violates constitutional rights, she said that passage of this act and the executive order creating military tribunals without political debate and public information strike at the core of civil liberties.

President Bush's executive order of November 13 creating military tribunals applies not only to the detainees held in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, but to the 20 million noncitizen in the United States, noted Tom Berning. Noncitizens in the United States, however, are entitled to all constitutional protections and cannot be denied due process.

This executive order also defines "terrorism" as damage to government property during a demonstration if the action involves changing public policy.

Mohyeddin Abdulaziz told the audience

that the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee has documented over 600 violent incidents against Arab Americans since September 11, including assault, arson, and six murders. He said more than 47 people have been expelled from airports because a passenger or crew member didn't like the way they looked.

Michael Itale, who was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami last year, was fired from his job as a sewing machine operator at Goodwill Industries for expressing his convictions and exercising his constitutional rights in a public debate, said Aaron Kappeler. "If I am going to vote for a candidate I want to know what he or she stands for," he added.

Anti-subversion and anti-terrorism acts have been used against workers and immigrants since World War II, as a means for Washington to advance its imperialist foreign policy.

Twenty-four people signed a petition protesting the firing of Itale by Goodwill. KUAT-FM, a local public broadcasting station, taped the forum and broadcast it the following Sunday.

## U.S. widens military support to Colombia

BY RÓGER CALERO

Protecting Occidental Petroleum's pipeline in Colombia is the object of an expansion of Washington's military intervention in the South American country.

The Bush administration has announced that it will give an additional \$98 million in military aid to the Colombian government to train and equip a rapid-response brigade to patrol the pipeline. The White House proposal marks a public shift from its stated policy that the military aid to the Colombian government is for fighting drug trafficking, revealing more clearly the reasons for Washington's military buildup in the region.

The military package would pay for the purchase of communications equipment and at least 12 additional transport helicopters, as well as the training of a 2,000- to 4,000-member "Critical Infrastructure Brigade" of the Colombian army to protect the 480-mile pipeline and other facilities.

"Everything else up to now has been justified in terms of fighting drugs," said Michael Shifter, with the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington. "This is a different purpose. I think that is a departure."

Patrick Leahy, head of the congressional foreign operations subcommittee, said, "For

the first time, the administration is proposing to cross the line from counternarcotics to counterinsurgency. This is no longer about stopping drugs. It's about fighting the guerrillas."

Many opponents of Washington's military aid to the Colombian regime have pointed out that the operation, begun under the Clinton administration, has been aimed at the rebel forces and working people from the beginning.

### Big exporter to United States

Occidental uses the pipeline to transport crude oil from the Caño Limón fields in the northeastern region of Arauca to the Coveñas Port in the Caribbean Sea through the pipeline. The Caño Limón oil reserve is the second largest in the country, producing nearly 25 percent of Colombia's oil exports. It is operated by the Los Angeles-based Occidental Petroleum Corp. and Ecopetrol, Colombia's state-owned oil company.

Last year, according to officials from the oil company, production was cut by 58 percent, or by 19 billion barrels, because of attacks on the pipeline and other facilities by the country's two guerrilla groups, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

(FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). The pipeline was bombed 170 times, resulting in the loss of \$500 million, according to Ecopetrol.

The February 7 *Wall Street Journal* said that the cost of extracting oil in Colombia is still relatively inexpensive despite increases in operating costs due to guerrilla attacks.

Oil production dominates Colombia's economy. It is the third largest supplier in Latin America to the United States after Mexico and Venezuela. Last year, companies produced an average of 604,000 barrels a day and exports exceeded \$3 billion.

Meanwhile, foreign capitalists have sought to expand their investments in Colombia's oil industry. In the last two years Colombia has signed 60 contracts with firms for the exploration of new oil reserves. At the beginning of February Ecopetrol announced the finding of two new oil fields as part of a joint venture with three companies.

### Additional \$1 billion in military aid

The Colombian government welcomed the Bush administration's decision to extend the scope of the military aid. In 2000 the U.S. Congress approved Plan Colombia,

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# Miners seek to restore black lung benefits

**Continued from front page**  
ville *Courier-Journal*. At another point he referred to black lung compensation as a "grave train" for coal miners.

The governor's about-face has gained national media coverage, with articles in the *New York Times* and national radio reports. Since the bill was enacted Patton has come under increasing pressure from miners and the labor movement to revise the law because it partially ties receiving benefits to job training.

Black lung, or coal miners pneumoconiosis, is a preventable disease caused by the inhalation of coal dust. Recognition that coal dust causes black lung, rules controlling the level of coal dust in mines, and the benefit program are all gains that came out of an epic struggle by miners in West Virginia in 1969, part of a struggle whereby rank-and-file miners and their interests gained sway in the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Since that victory, benefits for those that contract black lung have been under attack. Federal benefits were drastically cut in the early 1980s. Only 7 percent of those that file for benefits are eventually able to qualify, and for half of these miners, the process takes a protected legal battle. Last year new federal rules governing these benefits were introduced despite a legal battle and sustained opposition by the coal bosses. Union and government officials say the new regulations are projected to only increase the number of successful claims to around 12 percent.

## Profits for coal bosses

The attacks on workers' compensation in Kentucky have allowed funds that were originally to be spent on aid to disabled coal miners to go into the coffers of the coal bosses instead.

In 1996 when the cuts were introduced, the bill's proponents said the goal was to cut annual costs from \$100 million to \$8 million. The actual amount spent ended up only being a small percentage of the lowest projection. The current bill is projected to cost the coal bosses only \$6 million for benefits.

Under the 1996 law not only did the number of claims filed by miners drop, but the percentage of successful claims plummeted. The year before the 1996 law went into effect almost 80 percent of the 5,604 miners who filed received benefits. That number fell to around 2 percent of the 800-plus miners who have filed since 1996.

In their drive to gut workers' compensation benefits, Patton and his supporters argued that coal bosses needed relief, given the slump in coal prices. Today, coal prices are way up, with spot prices ranging from the high \$30s to the low \$50s. Patton said that the proposed black lung benefits would require a tax of 3 cents a ton on coal. At \$30 a ton for coal, the tax represents one-tenth of one percent of the market price.

Coal bosses and their backers are attacking a provision in the new legislation that would provide benefits to a miner with 15 years of experience in the mines and where that miner has evidence of either black lung or impaired breathing.

Senator Stine asked if the law is "something that is going to compensate injured workers for injuries on the job, or is it going to be an entitlement program. When you get into making those assumptions, it comes awful close to an entitlement program."

In a similar vein, the mine bosses "contend that the governor's proposal will mean a return to abuses in which miners could too easily receive lump settlements on the basis of early black lung symptoms," reported the *New York Times*. Or as Kentucky Coal Association president Bill Caylor cynically put it: "Pretty good deals, enough for a bass boat and a pickup truck."

Miners have a different take on what the bosses call "abuses." They call them "just due" and "what's mine by right." The fight to be compensated for black lung has been seen as a right by coal miners and was the main impulse behind their mass mobilization in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The 15-year threshold is one glaring weakness in the reform bill. In the early battles around black lung, miners fought for a much shorter period of eligibility. In one state, eligibility was granted after two or more years of continuous occupational exposure. In dusty working conditions, which is the norm in the majority of mines today, especially



Above, miners rally in Washington, D.C., in defense of black lung benefits, March 1981. These federal benefits were drastically cut in the early 1980s. Coal miners have been fighting to defend their right to health and safety against profit drive of bosses.

in Kentucky, miners will and are getting black lung much sooner.

Mike South, the former head of National Black Lung Association, worked in the mines for only 11 years before contracting black lung. South, who died last year, spent the better part of his last years having to breathe from an oxygen tank.

## 'Retraining' proposal

Despite the media focus, the main axis of Patton's proposed reform has to do with a retraining scheme for coal miners, not providing an entitlement program for those who develop black lung. In a *National Public Radio* interview, Patton explained that "we have got to get him [the miner] out of the mines...into another occupation before they have this disease that disables them," echoing the axis of the 1996 law.

The wife of a coal miner with black lung pointed out to the Louisville, Kentucky, *Courier-Journal* that retraining is not what disabled miners need. She said that according to the 1996 law, her husband, who worked for 19 years in coal mines in eastern Kentucky and is 43 years old, "had to go to school. This man can't hold down a desk job. He can't even draw his breath."

Another miner interviewed by the *Courier-Journal* would only get benefits if he enrolled in an accredited vocational course. But this miner can't read and his medical condition gives him limited mobility, the paper reported. His only option is to qualify for a cash settlement that pays out \$95 a week. A UMWA representative said that the

retraining demand "does not exist for workers in any other field. Why should a coal miner have to attend vocational school to get compensation?"

Retraining, as well as denying miners the benefits they deserve, also takes the heat off the coal bosses, many coal miners explain. Instead of taking the steps available to prevent the disease, such as through the use of water sprays, scrubbers, air ventilation, respirators, and dust collectors, many coal bosses are covering up high dust levels with fake tests.

One series in the *Courier-Journal* reported on the fraudulent practices at Patton's coal mines. One boss, who worked under Patton for six years, said, "He cheated every test he took." One miner stated that "ventilation curtains were hung only when a federal mine inspector showed up" and that he "couldn't even see the miner [machine] when he loaded." Another miner said of the company fraud, "We ate more dust in one day than them sampling machines took in 16 years."

## Long history in Kentucky

The fight between coal miners seeking to defend their health and safety interests, and coal bosses and their political benefactors determined to grab as much from miners as possible, has been a central fight in Kentucky. Once the largest coal-producing state, Kentucky now ranks third, but still has the most mines with over 500 and more than 13,000 miners. It is an area where the boom in coal has seen not only a rise in coal prices

but a growth in the number of miners. In the past year the number of miners has increased by more than 1,000 and the majority are new inexperienced miners. But today only 4 percent of Kentucky's miners are represented by the UMWA.

The conflict has come to the surface in the state in various ways. Two years ago, 4,000 unionists marched and rallied at the state capital in Frankfort in support of collective bargaining rights for public employees and to strengthen workers' compensation laws. The action was organized by the state AFL-CIO.

At the rally, Patton pledged to "refine and improve" workers' compensation. Miners refused to march behind Patton and some in the crowd booed him. Miners interviewed at the protests by the *Courier-Journal* were skeptical of Patton's pledges. "He'll end up doing a bunch of cosmetic things and we'll be back here in two years," said Jackie Clayton of Madisonville.

Two extensive series in the *Courier-Journal* have highlighted aspects of the coal bosses' attacks on miners. Articles in 1998 titled "Dust, Deception and Death" exposed "widespread cheating" in coal-dust tests and found that "hundreds of coal miners nationwide die each year" because of this fraud. The series has been distributed by the miners union and activists in the black lung fight. In its wake, the state held hearings in the coalfields where both union and non-union miners spoke out against the practices of coal operators.

Patton has also felt heat over the inadequate state oversight of coal miners' safety. A three-part series in the *Courier-Journal* in 2000 revealed that the state mining safety board had a disciplinary system that ignores scores of violators, excuses others, and imposes harsh penalties on only a few. Little had been done to stop operators and supervisors who had broken mine-safety laws from working in the state. The board never took action over federal criminal cases involving nearly 100 coal companies and supervisors and never revoked a company's mining license.

In 2001 Patton abolished the Kentucky mining board, created a new board in its place, and ordered an overhaul of the system for disciplining coal companies and miners who violate state safety laws. In the last eight years, Kentucky has ranked second in the number of mine fatalities with almost 100 killed. It ranks fourth in the number of coal miners injured on the job.

*Tony Lane is a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248 in southwestern Pennsylvania.*

# Airport workers in California call protest

## Continued from front page

vice Employees International Union Local 790, Filipinos for Affirmative Action, Philip Vera Cruz Justice Project, San Francisco Labor Executive Council, and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

The rallies and press conferences will protest the Aviation and Transportation Act signed by U.S. president George Bush in November. The law places airport security under federal authority and requires all workers who screen baggage to be U.S. citizens.

The Transportation Security Administration is slated to take over airport security February 19 and will have until next November to make sure all screeners are citizens. Nationwide, about 15 to 25 percent of these workers are noncitizens. At San Francisco airport, about 800 workers, or 80 percent of those employed as screeners, are noncitizens—the majority Filipino.

In a fact sheet about the fight, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) states that immigrant status "has nothing to do with a worker's ability to do his or her job.... The reason many airport screeners are immigrants is that these jobs are difficult, low-wage labor traditionally passed over by U.S. citizens."

Up to now the baggage screening has been carried out by private security companies. The SEIU notes that although baggage screening "is stressful and requires constant worker attention, most security companies pay less than \$6 an hour."

Nine workers employed at the Los Angeles and San Francisco airports filed suit against the federal government to stop the

implementation of the citizenship requirement. The government has 60 days to respond.

Ruby Gonzales Boja, one of the plaintiffs, has worked for five years as a screener for International Total Services at the San Francisco airport. "This is very unfair for people like me who worked there for a long time," she told the *Militant*. "Some have even

worked there for 15 or 25 years." The suit is "for everybody who works there. I stand [as a plaintiff] on behalf of my co-workers because we are one union," she added.

The baggage screeners at the San Francisco airport joined SEIU Local 790 a year ago.

*Rollande Girard is a garment worker.*

from Pathfinder

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# Inter-imperialist conflict sharpens over U.S. 'unilateralism'

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Imperialist powers in Europe are coming into open conflict with the course being pursued by Washington coming out of its brutal war against Afghanistan.

President George Bush set the tone for the U.S. rulers in his state of the union speech, in which he reiterated their determination to pursue their own class interests anywhere in the world. Bush threatened north Korea, Iraq, and Iran, calling them members of "an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world." He added: "All nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security."

"We hope the United States does not give in to the strong temptation of unilateralism," French prime minister Lionel Jospin told a February 8 conference of parliamentarians from European countries. "We cannot reduce the problems of the world to the single dimension of the struggle against terrorism, despite its pressing importance, nor rely on the predominance of military means."

Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine urged other European powers to speak out more forcefully as they face a United States that is acting "unilaterally, without consulting others, making decisions based on its own view of the world and its own interests."

U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell responded to Védrine, stating Washington will not "shrink from doing that which is right, which is in our interest, even if some of our friends disagree with us."

In a February 6 editorial, the conservative French daily *Le Figaro* contrasted the U.S. approach with a conference hosted by the French government. "This is the antithesis of American views," it asserted. "At a time when President George W. Bush is denouncing an 'axis of evil'...France has called an international conference...to try to halt the proliferation of ballistic missiles."

Following a February 10 meeting with Bush in the White House, German chancellor Gerhard Schröder stated that Washington's "concern about the development of weapons of mass destruction, for example in Iraq, is appropriate." He added, however, that Bush had assured him there were no immediate plans to attack Iraq. "We all know the language used differs. Bush told me that he harbors no attack plans. I am relying on that."

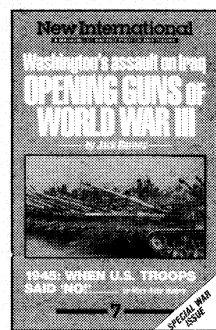
Prior to Schröder's meeting with Bush, an editorial in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* daily newspaper stated, "It can't be easy being the first grumpy European to appear at the throne of the freshly anointed American Caesar."

German foreign minister Joschka Fischer said in a February 12 interview in the conservative daily *Die Welt* that the "international coalition against terror is not the foundation to carry out just anything against anybody, and particularly not on one's own."

for further reading

## Opening Guns of World War III

Washington's Assault on Iraq



Jack Barnes  
The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist

forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In *New International* no. 7. \$12.00

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All the European foreign ministers see it that way." He added that a "world with 6 billion people will not be led into a peaceful future by the mightiest power alone."

Speaking on February 2 at the annual Munich defense conference, Bavarian premier Edmund Stoiber, the Christian Social Union Party's candidate for chancellor in September elections, called on Berlin to increase its military budget. "We need modern forces that can be mobilized quickly with the technically best equipment," he said. "We Europeans must not just rely on America. We must do more for our own security and for global peace."

### German naval deployment

The conference coincided with the German navy's largest deployment since World War II, as six warships joined U.S.-led patrols off the Horn of Africa aimed at interdicting ships heading for Somalia. The German army has also sent commandos to join the international occupation force based in Kabul.

NATO secretary-general George Robertson told the Munich conference that NATO is "an essential part" of the "campaign against terrorism." Warning of the danger of U.S. "unilateralism," he stressed, "Even superpowers need allies and coalitions to provide bases, fuel, airspace and forces." Robertson called for an increase in military spending by the European imperialists.

The *Wall Street Journal* addressed the same point in a February 5 editorial. "The U.S. spent twice as much on defense last year as every other NATO member combined," it reported. "With the exception of the British, Europe's military forces are antique, often unable to communicate with their American counterparts, much less fight with them."

Brushing aside the criticisms voiced in European capitals, Bush administration officials have repeatedly affirmed the aggressive approach laid out on January 29. *USA Today*

## Supporters of Palestinian struggle rally in Washington, D.C.



Militant/Sam Manuel

More than 75 people rallied February 7 to protest the visit by Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon to the White House. The action was called by a coalition of organizations opposing Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

reported on February 12 that "President Bush is lining up support from allies in the Middle East for military action against Iraq." The "allies" include the Russian government, a major Iraqi creditor that has concluded sizable oil deals with Baghdad. Moscow insists that any action must be carried out under the United Nations banner. "No decision has been made about the timing or scope of the campaign," wrote the newspaper.

Quoting a White House official, *USA Today* noted that "U.S. Vice President Cheney is expected to discuss efforts to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein when [he] visits ten Middle East countries in March."

### 'The only superpower'

Former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher threw her support behind Washington in a February 11 *New York Times* column entitled "Advice to a Superpower."

"How and when, not whether, to remove [Saddam Hussein in Iraq] are the only important questions," she wrote, predicting that

such an effort would likely "involve a massive use of force. America's allies, above all Britain, should extend strong support to President Bush in the decisions he makes on Iraq." The British government of Anthony Blair is the most enthusiastic backer of Washington's war policy among the larger imperialist powers.

Reminding the French and German rulers of the weight of U.S. imperialism in the world, Thatcher wrote that in the war against Afghanistan, America "has proved to itself and to others that it is in truth (not just in name) the only global superpower, indeed a power that enjoys a level of superiority over its actual or potential rivals unmatched by any other nation in modern times."

"As long as America works to maintain its technological lead, there is no reason why any challenge to American dominance should succeed," the Iron Lady wrote, adding that Washington and London should not get "bogged down with ambitious nation building" in Afghanistan.

# Millions in Iran denounce U.S. threats

Continued from front page  
bring that about."

The *New York Times* reported the following day that "senior officials said there was a consensus within the administration that he must be overthrown and that plans to do so are being drawn up. But there is no agreement as to how precisely that should be done or how long the United States should be prepared to wait for action. Still, there are indications that the planning is becoming increasingly serious."

In a report from Tehran, Iran's capital, the *Times* said the massive march there February 11 "harkened back to the early days of the Islamic revolution, with the American flag burned here for the first time in recent memory."

During the revolution, workers organized a general strike that paralyzed the economy until the shah fled. Poor peasants seized land. The U.S.-backed dictatorship finally fell when a popular insurrection—joined by rank-and-file soldiers who distributed arms to the people—engulfed Tehran. A year later, students took over the U.S. embassy in Tehran and published volumes of documents revealing a vast U.S. spy network aimed at overturning the Islamic Republic that replaced the shah.

The current Iranian government, headed by President Mohammed Khatami, favored the U.S. war that deposed the Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan and has sought closer relations with Washington since taking office. While welcoming Tehran's stance on the Afghanistan war, the U.S. government has charged Iranian officials with promoting terrorism, arming Palestinians, and undermining the new Afghan regime.

Khatami addressed the mass rally February 11 in Tehran. "Amid the dirge-like chants of 'Death to America!'" reported the *Times*, "President Khatami tried to display Iran's milder face, stressing his government's interest in detente."

The crowd responded most, however,

when Khatami condemned the U.S. government. "The American people should ask today how much of the awful and terrifying incidents of Sept. 11 were due to terrorist acts, and how much of it was due to the foreign policy adopted by American officials," said Khatami. "America, or at least some of its officials, see themselves as masters of the world. Since they have power, they want to force the world to obey them and exert pressure on countries that disobey. Your revolution threatened America's illegitimate interests in the region, so it is obvious that you are the target of its animosity."

One Iranian demonstrator told the *Times*, "As long as our revolution is against America, we support it. The day there is peace between this country and America, the revolution is over."

The rally drew Iranians with many different political perspectives, all of them outraged by Bush's remarks. London's *Financial Times* noted that "many turned out who would not normally lend their presence to such pro-regime occasions." Reports indicate there were massive turnouts for similar rallies in cities across the country.

A few Iranians pointedly went elsewhere for the day. The *New York Times* commented that in "affluent north Tehran, where one occasionally hears support for the idea that Bush should carry through with his threat to bomb, cars laden with skis headed out of town toward the slopes in the balmy spring-like weather."

Iraq's president, Saddam Hussein, stated February 11 that "we are against an attack on Iran for many reasons. If anyone imagines otherwise, he should listen to us clearly. We are not of the kind that plays with words or compromises. Our stance is firm." In 1980, Hussein launched a war against Iran that was quietly backed by Washington, which hoped the Iranian revolution would be destroyed. The Iraqi forces were unable to overcome Iranian regular troops and the ten of thousands of Iranian combatants who

volunteered. The war ended in 1988.

Iranian president Khatami stated in late January of this year that his country opposes "foreigners" interfering in Iraq, a clear reference to the U.S. government.

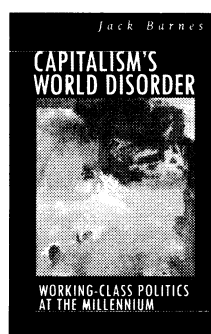
Meanwhile, in Washington, while there is bipartisan backing for the war course of U.S. imperialism, Senate Majority Leader Thomas Daschle cautioned Bush over the "axis of evil" speech. "I think we've got to be very careful with rhetoric of that kind," said Daschle. "We've already seen the moderates in Iran scramble to draw distance between us and them, and I think we have to be very careful with how we approach all three countries."

from Pathfinder

## Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

BY JACK BARNES

"The capitalist rulers offer us social disaster. They offer us depression. They offer us death from curable disease. They offer us war. They offer us fascism. They offer us an unending list of horrors. But we offer ourselves the ability to prevent those horrors from becoming the final reality, the confidence that we can transform that future." Also available in Spanish and French. \$23.95



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# 'One more political weapon in our arsenal in battle of ideas'

The following is the presentation by Mary-Alice Waters to a February 9 meeting of more than 200 to celebrate the launching of the new book *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* by Victor Dreke (see accompanying article). The book launching was organized in connection with the 11th Havana International Book Fair.

Waters is editor of this book-length interview with Cuban revolutionary leader Victor Dreke, the author of its introduction, and president of Pathfinder Press, which earlier this month published the book in English and Spanish.

The previous day, *From the Escambray to the Congo* was also launched at a workers assembly of some 70 people at the National Union of Caribbean Construction Enterprises (UNECA) in Havana. Dreke is currently director of UNECA's construction projects in Africa.

❖  
Thank you for giving Pathfinder the opportunity to be here with you today to present this powerful new book, which captures so well the heart and soul of the Cuban Revolution.

I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to compañero Dreke, for his many hours of work, accomplished with great good humor and patience; to the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution for their support and encouragement; and to Compañeras Irida Aguirrechu and Ana Morales, whose competence and enthusiasm made everything possible.

Others will speak about what this book means to compañeros in Cuba. I want only to add a few words on why it is so important outside Cuba.

For those of us on the front lines of the class struggle in the imperialist countries, or in the so-called Third World, *From the Escambray to the Congo* is not only a book. For us it is one more political weapon in our arsenal. It increases our firepower and allows us to take the offensive in the battle of ideas that we, as well as you, are waging on a daily basis.

Rebel-minded young people in many countries the world over will see themselves reflected in compañero Dreke's account of his experiences as a scrappy, rebellious teenager, always in trouble with the police, and not sure of anything beyond his hatred for the bloody dictatorship, the Yankee overlords, and his determination to resist.

## Storm the gates of heaven

But Victor Dreke's story takes a different turn with the assault on Moncada, the launching of the revolutionary war, and the victory of the Cuban Revolution. Through his story we see the capacity of ordinary men and women—workers, farmers, students,

shopkeepers, housewives—to transform themselves as they cease being victims and “dare to storm the gates of heaven” (to borrow Marx's eloquent description of the men and women of the Paris Commune).

That is the lesson of the Cuban Revolution. *Sí, se puede.* With a leadership worthy of them, men and women whose existence is often not even recognized by the rich and arrogant are capable of taking on the most powerful empire the world has ever known. We need not remain outside the gates of heaven. We can win.

In the United States, especially, Dreke's story has an additional powerful message. It shows us the kind of revolutionary power of the workers and farmers necessary to even begin to eradicate the legacy of centuries of African slavery in our hemisphere. Whatever its imperfections, only socialist Cuba provides an example of how the racist discrimination that still permeates all aspects of social and economic relations in the United States—and elsewhere throughout the Americas—can be eliminated.

So when people ask us why Pathfinder publishes books like *From the Escambray to the Congo*, or *Haciendo historia*, or *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, our answer is simple: because they are needed.

## What capitalism offers

In the economic, social, and political crisis exploding in Argentina today, we see the future capitalism has in store for us all. We see the outrage and resistance of workers, farmers, students, unemployed, and sectors of the middle classes. But we also see that they do not yet have either the leadership they deserve, nor the consciousness tempered by struggle they need.

That process is only now beginning. It will take more than a few days or months. There will be no small number of defeats before lessons are learned and some victories registered.

It is precisely in these conditions that now, more than ever, we need accounts such as Dreke's that do not try to simplify or evade the real contradictions and complexities that are intertwined in any revolutionary struggle. Books that help us all to concretely, to truly understand the example of the Cuban Revolution—not to copy, but to learn from and use what is applicable to our own struggles now.



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Above, Mary-Alice Waters speaking at launching of *From the Escambray to the Congo*. To her left are Victor Dreke, author of the book, and Irida Aguirrechu, of *Editoria Política*. Left, part of an overflow crowd of 200 attending a February 2 event at the book fair that included many revolutionary combatants who fought in Cuba's liberation war, in the *Lucha Contra Bandidos* described in the new title, and in internationalist missions in Africa. The book, said Waters, “increases our firepower and allows us to take the offensive in the battle of ideas that we, as well as you, are waging on a daily basis.”



## Changes within the U.S.

The profound changes taking place within the United States today are less visible and less known than what is happening in the streets of Argentina, but they are ultimately even more important “with regard to the great contemporary issue of relentless struggle against Yankee imperialism,” to use Che's words in his preface to *Episodes of the Revolutionary War: Congo*.

In the events of September 11 the imperialist rulers, with Washington in the lead as usual, immediately recognized an opportunity—under the banner of a supposed war against “terrorism”—to implement measures they had long been preparing. Contrary to the claims often echoed throughout the imperialist world, September 11 did not give birth to a new world situation. But the imperialists' response *has* accelerated the velocity of the class struggle, increased the contradictions inherent in the already dominant political trends, both inside the United States and internationally.

Within hours the U.S. rulers had decided on their war of conquest and recolonization of Afghanistan, and charted their other moves to redraw the political map from India and Pakistan, to the republics of the former Soviet Union, to the Philippines, to Iraq, to the Andes, to Guantánamo.

Domestically they also announced plans laid long ago to establish a North American “homeland” military command, military tribunals to circumvent protections guaranteed by the amendments to the U.S. constitution, a national identity card, and other police-state measures. These moves are aimed not at immigrant workers alone, but at immigrant workers as the next step in preparing assaults against broadening layers of working people.

How far and how fast the rulers are able to carry out these measures—some but not all of which they have already begun to implement—will be decided in struggle in the months and years ahead.

## Workers' resistance

The rulers met some success in their drive to convince workers and farmers that the recession, whose deepening effects we had already been experiencing for several months, was the consequence of the September 11 attacks. But they also met with resistance and growing disbelief.

Less than two weeks after the Twin Towers were attacked, 22,000 public workers in the state of Minnesota went on strike, refusing to subordinate their demands for long-delayed pay increases and relief from soaring medical costs to the so-called war on terrorism. Despite the calling up of the state National Guard to act as strikebreakers, these workers refused to back down. Two weeks later they won important con-

cessions on their new contract and returned to work stronger and more united.

In the midst of the bombing campaign against Afghanistan in November, more than 200 striking teachers in the state of New Jersey, most of them women, were arrested and sent to jail for defying a court order to return to work. They were marched out of the courtroom, chained one to another, with clenched fists raised, vowing to continue the fight until their demands for health care coverage were won.

In Chicago, in December, illegally terminated packinghouse workers, carrying signs in English, Spanish, and Polish, threw up picket lines around their former plant, demanding the severance and vacation pay denied them.

Such examples among many are important indicators of the difficulties the U.S. rulers face from the start in implementing their militarization drive, and of the political mood they must confront. This, above all, is the political obstacle to their plans, as they direct their “war against terrorism” against new and more numerous targets.

*From the Escambray to the Congo* is a book that will be sold not only in the giant monopoly bookstore chains across the United States and around the world. It will be sold by communist workers and young socialists on the picket lines such as those I've mentioned, in the factories, the mines, the fields, the universities and high schools, and on sidewalks and street corners in working-class neighborhoods in city and town.

For political-minded workers, farmers, and young people everywhere, the trajectory of the Cuban Revolution, as seen in the pages of this book, remains living proof that in the tumultuous anti-imperialist battles and revolutionary class struggles that are before us in the 21st century, there is every reason to fight, to fight like a Cuban, like our five Cuban brothers in the prisons of the Empire are fighting—with the knowledge and conviction we will win.

As the Cuban Revolution confirmed, the people with money will not (as Victor Dreke's father had come to believe) always remain on top. More than 40 years of intransigent struggle later, the Cuban Revolution continues to show the way for working people the world over who are fighting for a world free of exploitation, racism, and imperialist domination. Yes, socialism is the only future possible for humanity.

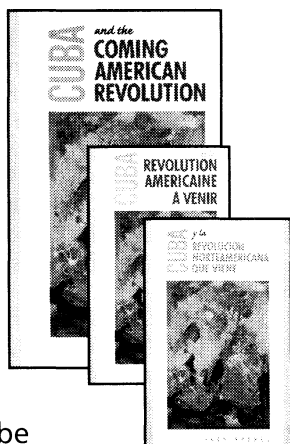
Pathfinder has published *From the Escambray to the Congo* with the confidence that the experience and knowledge it conveys will help us all to lessen the cost and shorten the road to that future. We look forward to many more such products of the Cuban Revolution and hope we can be part of a collective effort to bring them to fruition.

## CUBA and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes

**There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba**

— Fidel Castro, March 1961

*Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made. Preface by Mary-Alice Waters. **In English, Spanish, and French. \$13.00**



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# Rebel Army sought unity of whites, blacks

## How revolutionary government took down 'rope' of racial discrimination

Reprinted below is an excerpt from the new Pathfinder book *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, an interview with Cuban revolutionary Victor Dreke.

Dreke fought in the Cuban revolutionary war, led by the Rebel Army, that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959. In the early 1960s, he was a commander of the volunteer battalions that fought the U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains of central Cuba. In 1965 he was second in command of the column of Cuban internationalist volunteers, headed by Ernesto Che Guevara, that joined with national liberation fighters in the Congo. He subsequently carried out numerous internationalist missions in Africa.

In the opening months of 1959 Cuba's revolutionary government declared illegal the multiple forms of state-sanctioned racial discrimination against blacks. In March discrimination in employment was barred. Over the next several weeks, all stores, shops, and other public facilities including the beaches were declared open to blacks. Rebel Army soldiers and militia members enforced these new measures on the spot, and any facility refusing to abide by them could be shut down forthwith.

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, and Luis Madrid, a Pathfinder editor, conducted the first session of the interview with Dreke in Havana on Oct. 26, 1999. Pathfinder editor Michael Taber and *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martin Koppel joined Waters in a second interview session on Dec. 2, 2001.

This book is now available, with simultaneous editions in English and Spanish. Copyright © by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

**Waters:** In January 1959 cadres of the Rebel Army suddenly found yourselves at the head of millions of Cubans more and more determined to transform the country from top to bottom. You began taking on responsibilities you previously would never have imagined.

What were you yourself doing during this initial period?

**Dreke:** At the triumph of the revolution, I held the rank of captain in the Rebel Army. At that time the top ranks were commander and then captain.

First I was a prosecutor for the revolutionary tribunal. Then I was a battalion chief in the Western Tactical Force.

The Tactical Force was created in May 1959. On May 20 we left Havana on foot with two battalions, headed for Pinar del Río. One went to Guanito and the other to Los Remates de Guane, toward the far end of Pinar del Río. The chief of this Tactical Force in the west was Commander Pinares, who later died in Bolivia with Che, and I was head of G Company and second in command of the 2nd Battalion.

The objective of this operation was to toughen up some compañeros who had joined the revolution in its last days. As we



Top photo courtesy of Victor Dreke  
Right, Militant/Martin Koppel  
**Above, Dreke speaking at public meeting in Cruces, Cuba, 1960. Dreke explains that before 1959 it was customary for a rope to be put up to divide blacks from whites during dances in the city's park. Right, Dreke giving interview in 2001. "With the advance of the revolution that type of racial discrimination has disappeared from our country," he stated. "For the rebels, white and black were one and the same."**

would take a city in the closing months of 1958, new compañeros would join our ranks. And some people hopped on the bandwagon following the triumph, trying to pass themselves off as combatants.

Our task was to identify the people capable of making the effort and then do careful work to train them. Because not everybody could physically withstand a march of hours and hours and hours—with little food, eating in camp, and hard work. They couldn't take it. So this allowed us to do a bit of weeding out. What remained of this Tactical Force was divided into three armies: Western, Central, and Eastern.

When the Western Tactical Force made this trip through the Pinar del Río mountains in May, we had already heard news that the notorious Corporal Luis Lara had risen in revolt there, but we didn't see anything. The trip also made it possible for me to get familiar with Pinar del Río, since the Rebel Army hadn't made it there during the war.

After I returned, Camilo [Cienfuegos], Rebel Army chief of staff, sent me to Sagua, as head of Squadron 35. At that time we had military squadrons for every region of the country.

Why did they name me chief of this squadron? Well, after the triumph of the revolution there were internal divisions in Sagua, and some problems surfaced among those in charge of the garrison. You'll remember, the Rebel Army didn't get to Sagua before the victory; we got there afterwards. And among those in the Sagua garrison were some people who weren't the best revolutionaries. The same thing happened in other places. These people had taken over and made themselves captains. As a result, some people from Sagua began to voice their complaints very loudly. It was a big mess, a scandal, causing political confusion.

Divisions had grown up between those who had been combatants on April 9 and those who hadn't.<sup>1</sup> This is explained in a speech Camilo gave in Sagua la Grande—it's printed in William Gálvez's book, *Camilo: Señor de la vanguardia* [Camilo: man of the vanguard]—where he read the riot act to people in Sagua for those divisions. And Camilo decided right then and there to name me chief of the Sagua squadron, since I'm from Sagua and knew the compañeros there.

That's why I spent some time in Sagua. Later, I was squadron chief in Cruces, which is also in Las Villas. I went there because of a very difficult racial problem that had to be dealt with.



There had been a dance in the park in Cruces shortly after the victory. As had been the longtime custom in this town, a rope was put up to divide the whites from the blacks—blacks on one side, whites on the other. This time, however, there was a big reaction, first of all from the squadron chief in Cruces, Captain Melquíades García. He was a compañero who was white, a fighter of the Rebel Army, who was highly regarded by all of us as a leader. And for the rebels, white and black were one and the same.

That night in Cruces, this Rebel Army captain removed the rope, and whites and blacks mixed together. Of course a big row developed. Some whites didn't like it, and I suppose some blacks didn't either. Some blacks crossed the line, and all hell broke loose.

The next morning I was summoned to the regimental squadron. I was to report to Félix Torres, inspector general of the regiment. I was taken to a meeting with the squadron chiefs—all of us were there—at which the Cruces events were reported. They described what had happened—the Rebel Army wanting unity among whites, blacks, everyone.

They decided to name a new chief in Cruces. Compañero Melquíades had done what was necessary, since that was what the revolution was going to do: remove the rope. But there had been a row. In fact, there were even leaders of the July 26 Movement in Cruces who had protested because we took down the rope.

"Dreke, you're squadron chief," they told me.

"If they reject blacks that way," I said to myself, "why are they sending me?"

Melquíades and I replaced each other. He was named head of Squadron 35 in Sagua, and I became head of Squadron 32 in Cruces. At that time you moved in a matter of hours. It's possible that in the two hours we've spent here talking, I could have been squadron chief in three different places!

"You go here," and then, "No, you go there. You go somewhere else. Get your stuff and go." No one could keep track. That's how it was in those days, a revolutionary whirlwind.

Well, I got to Cruces and introduced myself to the local authorities. They treated me politely. We greeted each other. And then it was explained that I was the new squadron chief.

The first thing I did was go for a walk in the afternoon, passing through the streets, unarmed, to talk to people there. I didn't carry my revolver.

Anyway, I didn't have any problems in Cruces. With the advance of the revolution, that type of racial discrimination has disappeared from our country.

**Waters:** What else were you involved in?

**Dreke:** I was in Sagua as head of Zone Number 4, which was an operational zone encompassing Sagua and Corralillo.

Why was that zone important in 1959–60? Because that was one of the areas where large numbers of weapons drops for the counterrevolutionary groups were made, together with infiltrations through Panchita Beach, Uvero Beach, Carahatas, and all those places. This was due to the characteristics of the Sagua area. There were some large landowners in the area, people who still had great economic power at that time. And it was by the coast.

I was given this mission, head of Zone 4. I worked there until January 13, 1960. Then I went to head up a militia training school in Hatillo,<sup>2</sup> where we prepared compañeros for militia duty in the Escambray cleanup, mainly milicianos from Las Villas.

<sup>1</sup> On April 9, 1958, the July 26 Movement called a general strike throughout Cuba. Announced without adequate preparation, the strike failed. In response, the Batista forces stepped up repression, and a number of July 26 Movement members were arrested or killed.

<sup>2</sup> There was also a school in La Campaña, which trained the first militias who defended the region.

From Pathfinder

### Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla

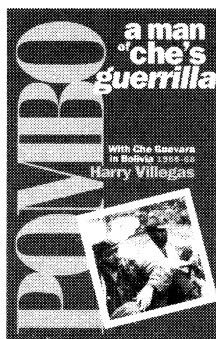
With Che Guevara in Bolivia, 1966–68

Harry Villegas

A never-before-published story of the 1966–68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara. This is the diary and account of

Pombo—a fighter still in his 20s who was a member of Guevara's general staff. Villegas, known by his nom de guerre, Pombo, is today a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. \$21.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.



FROM Pathfinder

### From the Escambray to the Congo

In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution

by Victor Dreke

In his account of how easy it became after the 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution to "take down the rope" that for decades had segregated blacks from whites at dances in town squares, yet how enormous was the battle to transform the social relations underlying this and all the other "ropes" inherited from colonialism, capitalism, and Yankee domination, Victor Dreke captures the historical challenge of our epoch.

At the heart of this book lies the willingness, determination, and creative joy with which Cuba's working people have, for more than forty years, defended their revolutionary course against the imperialist bastion to the north.

In English and Spanish, \$17.00

Special offer: \$13



Infantry battalion of Rebel Army after climbing highest mountain in Pinar del Río, 1959.

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# Havana book fair celebrates publication of 'From the Escambray to the Congo'

## Continued from front page

for the past two years to expand the involvement of the entire population in education and culture as part of the transformation of working people necessary for the advance of a socialist revolution.

One popular feature of the fair has been the daily events held to present a wide array of books. Among these were a number of political titles, such as *Following the Trails of Black Civilizations in the Americas*, published by the Fernando Ortiz Foundation. Another is *Tania, The Unforgettable Guerrilla Fighter*, by Marta Rojas, Mirta Rodríguez Calderón, and others on the life of Tamara Bunke, the German-Argentine revolutionary who fought and died in the 1966-67 guerrilla front led by Ernesto Che Guevara in Bolivia.

Pathfinder Press, which as in previous years has a book exhibit at the Havana fair, held special presentations of three new titles. In addition to *From the Escambray to the Congo*, the publishing house presented English and Spanish editions of *Playa Girón/ Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, by Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández, and *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, by Thomas Sankara. The latter title, now available in French, English, and Spanish, was introduced jointly with *Equality and Participation by Mozambican Women* by Mozambican author Vitoria Afonso Longa de Jesús, published by Tricontinental Editions.

At the meeting to present *From the Escambray to the Congo*, Iraida Aguirrechu, who organized editorial work on the book in Cuba, noted the presence in the audience of numerous individuals who have worked with and fought alongside Víctor Dreke over the last 50 years. Among these were combatants of the Cuban revolutionary war to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in the late 1950s, the campaign to wipe out the U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains of Cuba in the first half of the 1960s, and internationalist missions to the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, and other African countries that the Cuban Revolution has fielded over the past four decades.

Because the huge turnout for the fair had



Above, speakers on platform at special presentation of new Pathfinder title *From the Escambray to the Congo*. From left to right, Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas, Brig. Gen. José Ramón Fernández, Armando Entralgo, Faure Chomón, Mary-Alice Waters, and Víctor Dreke (speaking). The box of books on the table was donated for use by the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

caused massive traffic jams on the road to La Cabaña fortress, several of the speakers and platform guests arrived during the course of the meeting. As each one came up to the front, the crowded hall burst into applause and another chair was brought up to the expanding platform.

Joining Col. Dreke at the speakers platform were brigadier generals and Heroes of the Cuban Revolution Harry Villegas, Rafael Moracén, and José Ramón Fernández, who is also vice president of the Council of Ministers; Faure Chomón, who commanded the forces of the March 13 Revolutionary Directorate in the Escambray region during Cuba's revolutionary war; Jorge Risquet, head of the Cuban internationalist column that was sent to Congo-Brazzaville at the same time that Guevara led a column of Cuban combatants in Congo-Kinshasa; Armando Entralgo, director of the Center



for the Study of Africa and the Middle East; Alexandre Nunes Correia, head of the World Health Organization for Africa and a former combatant in the Guinea-Bissau war for independence against Portuguese colonial rule; and Mary-Alice Waters, one of Dreke's interviewers and editor of the book, as well as president of Pathfinder. Aguirrechu, Entralgo, Waters, Dreke, Nunes, Villegas, Chomón, and Risquet all spoke in the course of the meeting.

## 'Spreads truth about Cuban Revolution'

"We are here to celebrate this beautiful book," said Aguirrechu of *From the Escambray to the Congo*, "a contribution to spreading the truth about the Cuban Revolution." She pointed to the 40-plus pages of photos and maps as one of its attractive features.

## 'Old oak trees' pay tribute to the 'young pines' of the revolution at workers meeting in Havana

HAVANA—The day before the February 9 presentation of *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* at the book fair, the book was launched here at a workers assembly of some 70 people at the National Union of Caribbean Construction Enterprises (UNECA).

UNECA is a Cuban construction enterprise that works on development projects around the world, especially in Africa, Asia,

and Latin America, such as the building of hospitals, roads, airports, and schools. UNECA construction workers, for example, helped build the international airport in Grenada during the 1979-83 revolution in that country, and put up fierce resistance when U.S. troops invaded the island in 1983, suffering some of the heaviest casualties. Dreke is currently director of UNECA's construction projects in Africa.

The meeting was addressed by local union secretary Margot Abreu; Arnaldo Hernández, local secretary of the Communist Party; Ivo Conde, of the national construction workers union; Iraida Aguirrechu, who coordinated work on the book in Cuba; Dreke; and Mary-Alice Waters, the book's editor. After the event, employees eagerly snapped up all 50 copies of the book that were on hand, as well as other Pathfinder literature on display.

The highlight of the meeting was Dreke's presentation of autographed copies of the book to UNECA employee Magali Lloret, the mother of Fernando Lloret, one of the five Cuban revolutionists framed up and convicted last year in a U.S. federal court on charges of "conspiracy to commit espionage" and, in one case, "conspiracy to commit murder."

Lloret expressed her appreciation for this act of solidarity and assured all those present that the books would rapidly reach the hands of the five heroes of the Cuban Revolution, who have now been dispersed by U.S. authorities to maximum-security prisons around the United States.

At both meetings, Dreke concluded his remarks by reading the dedication written in each of the books: "To the five heroic prisoners of the empire: I congratulate you for your firmness and bravery. You are worthy representatives of the people of Martí, Maceo, Camilo, Che, and Fidel. I send you this book with all the respect and affection you deserve. The old oak trees are proud of the new pines. Víctor Dreke."

--M.K. and A.H.

Entralgo, author of the preface, explained that it is Dreke's account of how he joined the movement against the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship as a high school student in the town of Sagua la Grande in central Cuba; his leading role in the struggle to wipe out U.S.-directed counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains in the first half of the 1960s; his participation in the internationalist mission to the Congo in 1965 led by Ernesto Che Guevara; and his subsequent internationalist work in Africa, for which, Entralgo noted, "he is well-respected in Africa" as a representative of the Cuban Revolution.

The book, he added, conveys Dreke's "enthusiastic attitude toward life."

Entralgo introduced one of the themes that ran throughout the afternoon meeting by saying that "it's an oversimplification to debate whether Che's Congo mission ended in defeat or victory" when the Cuban combatants who were aiding Congolese anti-imperialist fighters withdrew from that African country. Those Cuban fighters pointed the road forward and were vindicated by subsequent anticolonial victories in sub-Saharan Africa.

Waters described the book as a political weapon for working people around the world. It demonstrates the fundamental lesson of the Cuban Revolution, she said—that "with a leadership worthy of them, the men and women whose existence is often not even recognized by the rich and arrogant are capable of taking on the most powerful empire the world has ever known. And winning." (See presentation by Waters on page 8.)

In the United States in particular, Waters added, Dreke's story illustrates the fact that "whatever its imperfections, only socialist Cuba provides an example of how the racist discrimination that still permeates all aspects of social and economic relations in the United States—and elsewhere throughout the Americas—can be eliminated."

Waters noted that Dreke's father had advised him not to get involved in political activity that could only "get you in trouble" because, as he saw it, the rich would always remain on top. The Cuban Revolution, however, proved that it was possible to overturn the capitalist system of oppression and exploitation, she said.

The president of Pathfinder also presented a donation of several dozen copies of *From the Escambray to the Congo* to the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

Picking up on Waters's reference to his father, Dreke explained that "my dad was not a Batista supporter. He was opposed to Batista. But he really didn't have confidence in a future where there would be equality among all Cubans, and even less that Cuba would achieve sovereignty." His father "was a black man who was poor, who sold fish, was a singer, and did various things to feed his family" in face of economic hardship and racist discrimination.

While telling young Víctor not to "get involved," however, his father also taught him, "Don't allow anyone to push you around, don't go down on your knees."

## Began as a young rebel against injustice

Taking to heart the refusal to be pushed around, Dreke said, he began as a teenage rebel protesting injustices before he understood clearly what he was fighting for. As he met more experienced revolutionary cadres, however, he developed a deeper political understanding and, from that point on, he and many other young combatants "followed the road of revolution." While "others abandoned that road, got tired, or betrayed it, the majority of us have continued and we will continue," he said.

Dreke described how different revolutionary organizations came together during the fight against the Batista dictatorship. He joined the July 26 Movement, led by Fidel Castro, and then the March 13 Revolutionary Directorate, which was active in the region of the Escambray mountains.

Later, in reply to a question from the audience during the discussion period, Faure Chomón expanded on this question. In October 1958, when Rebel Army commander Che Guevara reached the Escambray after his column fought its way across half the

## Contribute to the Books for Cuba Fund

Militant readers are encouraged to contribute to the Books for Cuba fund, which helps make it possible for Pathfinder books to reach working people and youth in Cuba.

Like their brothers and sisters around the world, Cuban working people find the

titles published by Pathfinder to be effective revolutionary political weapons, including in the defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Through the fund, Pathfinder is able to send books and pamphlets to Cuban organizations and institutions which request them. During book fairs, the titles are made available to Cubans in pesos, at prices they can afford.

Among other initiatives, the fund also makes it possible to respond to the political interest in the books in Cuba with special donations to libraries and other cultural institutions.

Contributions, large or small, are welcome. Please send checks or money orders made out to the Militant and earmarked "Books for Cuba Fund" to the Militant, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.



Militant/Jonathan Silberman  
Pathfinder stall at this year's book fair attracted lively discussion, interest in books.





Militant/Jonathan Silberman  
Cuban leaders Jorge Risquet, above, and Faure Chomón, right.



length of Cuba, he took command of all the anti-Batista forces in the region. "We received Che and the Ciro Redondo column [of the Rebel Army] as fellow fighters," said Chomón. "There was never any question that Che was the commander, designated by the commander-in-chief of the Rebel Army, Fidel Castro."

#### Welcomes discussion

In the book Dreke explains the struggle that unfolded after the victory of the revolution, as tens of thousands of workers, farmers, and young volunteer militia members organized to fight the U.S.-sponsored coun-

Dreke concluded by saying that the donation of *From the Escambray to the Congo* to the Association of Combatants would be used to make the book as widely available as possible. He noted that the association would be organizing a series of book presentations in Villa Clara and Sancti Spiritus provinces after the Havana book fair.

#### 'My commander Moja' in Guinea-Bissau

Nunes then spoke briefly, referring to "my commander Moja," Dreke's nom de guerre



Militant/Jonathan Silberman  
Víctor Dreke autographs his book at end of meeting. To Dreke's left is his companion Ana Morales, who collaborated in the preparation of the new title.

terrevolutionary bands that operated in the Escambray, sowing terror among the population until the last ones were crushed in 1965. Dreke noted that what he said in the book about the origin and character of these bands was not something everyone would agree with, that "maybe 2 percent would disagree and 3-5 percent would be undecided," but that he would "welcome discussion" with those who held other views.

Referring to the Cuban column that went to the Congo in 1965 to fight alongside Congolese freedom fighters, Dreke noted that he had not been willing to speak publicly on that experience until Guevara's account was published two and a half years ago. He argued that, while Che's account in his *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: Congo* is completely accurate, he disagreed with Guevara's conclusion that the Congo mission was a failure. He noted that there had been two Congo missions at the time, the one to Congo-Kinshasa led by Guevara and the one to Congo-Brazzaville led by Jorge Risquet, in which Gen. Moracén took part as well.

The revolutionary fighter humorously related the initial comment by Alexandre Nunes Correia on the book's title that "something is missing: what happened to the experience in Guinea-Bissau?" Dreke headed Cuba's military mission to Guinea-Bissau in 1966-68 in support of the independence struggle there. He took the opportunity to invite Nunes, who had just arrived, to join the speakers platform.

in Africa. He explained that when, as a teenager in Guinea-Bissau, he joined the guerrilla movement fighting for independence from Portuguese colonialism, he served in a unit under Dreke's command. He joked that to him, Dreke "seemed like a Guinean who just happened to be born in Cuba." Nunes paid tribute to all the Cuban internationalist combatants who gave their lives in Africa.

Villegas, who is today responsible for the political work of the Combatants Association, came back to the theme of how he, like Dreke and other young combatants in the struggle against the U.S.-backed dictatorship, had begun by reacting to the injustices of the world that surrounded them, and then they realized that they were involved in "a much larger struggle" that had to do with "the principle for which we continue to fight—the full dignity of humankind."

He expanded on the importance of the unification of the revolutionary forces in the old Las Villas province under Guevara's leadership—the July 26 Movement, the Revolutionary Directorate, the Popular Socialist Party, and smaller forces that all came together there to assure the victory.

Regarding the 1965 Congo mission, where the Cuban column withdrew after serving there for several months, Villegas said, "This was not a failure by Che. I believe the objective conditions did not allow for any other outcome" at the time. But the internationalist mission did contribute to "the revolutionary ferment" in Africa and

## Cuban leader opens book fair



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Above, Cuban president Fidel Castro speaks at the opening ceremony of the 11th Havana International Book Fair. Cuban daily *Granma International* reported that Castro welcomed the participants gathered at the La Cabaña Fortress, an 18th-century military installation where the book fair is being held.

Referring to the weapons still standing in the fort, Castro said the use of cannons will be relegated to prehistory and replaced with ideas. "This is what our people are endeavoring in the battle of ideas," he said, referring to efforts to defend socialism today. After staging the fair both this year and last at the fortress, "we will have to rename it the Book Fortress" one day this century, he said.

Some half a million books were sold at the fair last year, reported *Granma*. Many people across the island began asking for more books and for such an event to be accessible to them. "It was an absolutely just demand," said Castro, "and we suggested that the Cuban Book Institute and the Ministry of Culture extend the fair throughout the country." The book fair will be taken to 18 cities, with a total of five million books available.

Castro briefly described programs of the revolution aimed at broadening the

involvement of people of all ages in education and culture. Some 480 titles presented at the fair this year were written by little-known authors from municipalities throughout the country. The government has acquired 15 small printing presses for printing facilities around the country that will allow any young poet or writer to see his or her books in print, he said.

The Cuban president pointed to efforts by the revolutionary government to make higher-level educational courses available to workers and farmers, and to introduce computers in elementary and secondary schools. He noted the high level of participation in the University for All, and announced two programs to expand libraries throughout the country.

Iroel Sánchez, president of the Cuban Book Institute, told the gathering that "each square meter of the fortress is filled with books from Cuban publishing houses and from 623 foreign professionals who have put their trust in our culture and our teachers."

Sánchez said that in spite of the world economic situation, which has an impact on the island, the cultural boom that Cuba is currently experiencing has helped increase the scope of the fair and the participation in it.

"gave an example that yes, this can be done," leading to the final defeat of colonialism and apartheid in Africa a quarter century later.

After the presentations, Dreke's suggestion for a question and answer period was enthusiastically taken up by the audience. Jorge Risquet responded to a question about the Congo mission. Like many other anti-imperialist movements that have suffered ups and downs, including Cuba's own revolutionary struggle, he said, this was not a failure "from a historical viewpoint. Just like the [1953] assault on the Moncada barracks cannot be considered a failure." Evidence of this, Risquet said, was the fact that from April 24, 1965, when the first Cuban fighters crossed Lake Tanganyika to join the Congolese anti-imperialist forces, to May 26, 1991, when the last Cuban military units left Angola after inflicting a crushing defeat on South Africa's apartheid army, "there were always Cuban combatants in Africa."

A questioner asked Dreke what his book's message was for the new generations in Cuba. He replied by reiterating a point he had made earlier, that "the old oaks are proud of the new pines," paraphrasing Cuban national hero José Martí about the veteran revolutionaries and the young generations. If young people in Cuba follow the example of the five framed-up Cuban revolutionaries who today are political prisoners in the United States, refusing to give up their fight for justice, "then the revolution's future is assured," he said.

As the discussion was taking place, sales of *From the Escambray to the Congo* were brisk. Members of the audience purchased 160 copies of the book, and dozens of them lined up for Dreke to autograph their copy.

The meeting was covered on Cuban television, and a photo with a brief article on the event appeared in the daily *Granma*.

The day after the Havana book fair ends, the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, in collaboration with the provincial governments of Villa Clara and Sancti

Spiritu, is organizing a series of presentations of the book in more than a half dozen towns and cities of central Cuba. These include Dreke's hometown of Sagua la Grande, Santa Clara, Trinidad, Placetas, Sancti Spiritu, Manicaragua, and Topes de Collante.

### Hear reports on the HAVANA BOOK FAIR and launchings of 'From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution'

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# U.S. sends Cubans to five different prisons

**Continued from front page**  
lanta. They were given breakfast at 9:00 a.m. and did not receive any other food or water until 11:00 p.m.

Devices called “black boxes” were attached to the handcuffs of Hernández, Labañino, and Guerrero, the three given life sentences. These reinforce the “handcuffs” locks, electronically track allegedly dangerous prisoners over long distances, and are very uncomfortable and lacerate the skin.

When they arrived at the Atlanta penitentiary, they were photographed, fingerprinted, and placed in isolation cells. At that time, René González was separated from the others, who have not seen him since. Unlike the time they spent at the Miami Federal Detention Center, they had to go into the corridor to receive their food, and at that time Gerardo, Ramón, and Antonio were able to see each other. Occasionally they were able to see Fernando González, on a lower floor.

The five were not allowed to bathe for three days. On January 30, representatives of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, who have visited these political prisoners regularly, were unable to carry out their consular visit because they had not been notified of the transfer.

On February 4, Hernández and Labañino were transferred to a prison in El Reno, Oklahoma. From that time on they have not seen Guerrero or González. At the Atlanta airport they and two other prisoners—elderly U.S. citizens, one in a wheelchair and the other using a walker—had to withstand cold temperatures while wearing only T-shirts, while their guards wore heavy coats and caps.

The spending money available to the five

at the Miami penitentiary has been transferred to the prisons where they will be placed. As a result, they cannot make phone calls until the transfer is complete.

## Five different prisons

A spokesperson for the Miami Federal Detention Center confirmed with the French Press Agency that the five Cuban patriots had been sent temporarily to a maximum security prison in Atlanta, from where they would be transferred to their final destinations. He announced that Gerardo Hernández would be in the prison in Lompoc, California; Ramón Labañino would go to Beaumont, Texas; Antonio Guerrero to Florence, Colorado; René González to Loretto, Pennsylvania; and Fernando González to Minnesota.

As the *Militant* goes to press, the transfer to these locations had not been completed.

According to the February 8 *Granma International*, Rogelio Polanco, editor-in-chief of *Juventud Rebelde*, the news daily of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba, noted at a roundtable discussion on Cuban TV that “according to federal law, the choice of prison locations cannot be appealed. He added that the three who received life sentences would be housed in maximum-security prisons, which are run as quasi-military organizations. The prison in Florence, Colorado, for instance, is a federal correctional facility opened in January 1995 and designed for top-security prisoners.”

The *Granma* article continued: “In a telephone conversation with Cuban TV journalist Miguel Ángel Masjuan, Gerardo’s lawyer Paul McKeena said that the legal team is working on an appeal

and does not feel that the trial was fair.”

In 1998 the FBI announced with much media hype that it had discovered a “Cuban spy network” in Florida. Those arrested were charged with trying to “infiltrate” the U.S. Southern Command, passing U.S. “military secrets” to Havana, and “infiltrating” and “disrupting” right-wing Cuban-American groups in Miami that seek to overthrow the revolutionary government of Cuba. A charge of “conspiracy to commit murder” was tacked on later against one of the five.

On June 8 a jury in a federal courtroom here handed down guilty verdicts against the five men on all 23 charges of “spying” for the government of Cuba. Gerardo Hernández was found guilty of the unprecedented charge of “conspiracy to commit murder” for allegedly providing Cuban authorities with flight plans of the four Brothers to the Rescue pilots whose planes were shot down in 1996 by the Cuban air force. A number of defense witnesses offered ample evidence that these rightists repeatedly violated Cuban airspace and refused to heed warnings to head back before they were downed near Havana.

In a statement featured in the June 20 issue of the Cuban daily *Granma*, the government of that country condemned the June 8 convictions in a U.S. court of five Cuban citizens on espionage and murder charges. The five, the statement says, were part of an operation to “discover and report on terrorist plans hatched against our people” in Florida by counterrevolutionary opponents of the Cuban Revolution.

The imprisoned Cubans wrote at the time: “Our tiny nation, which has heroically survived four decades of aggressions and

threats to its national security, of subversion plans, sabotage, and destabilization, has every right to defend itself from its enemies who keep using U.S. territory to plan, organize, and finance terrorist actions breaking your own laws in the process.”

In mid-December, Hernández received two consecutive life terms plus 80 months in jail for these trumped-up charges. Days later, Labañino was sentenced to one life term; René González received consecutive 10-year and five-year sentences; and Fernando González got 19 years in jail. Antonio Guerrero, the last to be sentenced, two days after Christmas, was given life.

## Campaign to free the five

Andrés Gómez, national coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Miami-based organization of Cubans supporting the revolution, said in an interview that his organization, the National Committee to Free the Five, the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange, and other organizations have launched a nationwide tour to demand freedom for the five. Public meetings begining February 13 in Philadelphia will go at least through the end of March. Gómez and Cuban Interests Section representatives will be among the featured speakers at a number of these meetings.

The February 8 *Granma* article also reported that “solidarity with the five Cuban patriots continues to grow around the world. In Peru, the Cuban-Peruvian Friendship House has collected thousands of signatures on a petition, and the Puerto Rican Committee of Solidarity with Cuba organized a large demonstration in front of the federal court in San Juan, calling for the prisoners’ release.

“In Uruguay, representatives of leftist parties also demanded the liberation of the Cuban heroes, and the same is true of rallies recently held in Porto Alegre, Brazil. In France there is a letter-writing campaign in solidarity with those anti-terrorist fighters.”

Interviewed on Cuban television during the February 7 roundtable, Dagoberto Rodríguez of the Cuban Interests Section stated that in the few conversations that he has been able to have with the five Cuban patriots recently, he has noted “their tremendous spirit, their unyielding integrity, their faith and confidence in the Revolution.”

According to *Granma*, all of the five “have demonstrated through their demeanor that they are more than prepared to put into effect a phrase sent by Fernando to his wife on December 23 of last year: ‘We will be able to withstand anything.’”

## FLORIDA

### Miami

**Abolish the Death Penalty.** Speaker: Mary Ann Schmidt. Fri. Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 8365 NE 2nd Ave. #206. Tel: (305) 751-7076.

## MINNESOTA

### St. Paul

**Celebrate the Publication of the New Pathfinder title *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* by Victor Dreke.** Sun. Feb. 24, 1:00 p.m. 113 Bernard St., West St. Paul. Tel: (651) 644-6325.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Argentine Workers Rebel against Capitalist Collapse. Eyewitness Report from Argentina.** Speaker: Romina Green, just returned from *Militant* reporting trip to Argentina. Fri. Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave., 3rd Floor. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$4 program. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**End British Rule in Ireland: Commemorate 30th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday.** Speaker: Roy Inglee, a participant in the commemoration of Bloody Sunday in Derry, Northern Ireland. Fri., Feb. 22, 7:30 PM. 5237 N. 5th Street. Donation: \$5. Tel: (215) 324-7020.

## NEW YORK

### Brooklyn

**Malcolm X: His Legacy for Today.** Speaker: Seth Dellinger, Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists. Fri., Feb. 15. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5. (718) 567-8014.

### Garment District

**The Legacy of Malcolm X for Today’s Fight-**

**ers.** Speaker: Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Avenue 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. (212) 695-7358.

### Upper Manhattan

**Cuba’s Proletarian Internationalism and its Impact in Africa.** Speaker: Luis Madrid, Socialist Workers Party, helped to interview Victor Dreke for Pathfinder’s *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*. Fri., Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: program \$5, dinner \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

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## Crisis in Argentina—an Eyewitness Report.

Speakers: Christian Catalan, *Militant* reporter in Argentina for two weeks. Sun. Feb. 24, 3:00 p.m. 4806 Main St. Suite 202. Donation: \$5. Tel. (604) 872-8343.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**The Occupation of Afghanistan: U.S. and N.Z. Rulers Prepare for Further Wars and Assaults on Workers’ Rights.** Fri., Feb. 22, 7:00 p.m. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Donation: \$3. Tel: (09) 276-8885.

### Christchurch

**The Lessons of the 1951 Waterfront Lockout.** Fri., Feb. 22, 7:00 p.m. Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (03) 365-6055

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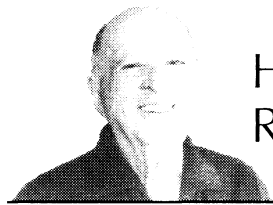
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**Man on moral high ground**—“The Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon said...that Israel should have killed Yasir Arafat when it had



**Harry Ring**

the chance in Lebanon 20 years ago.” Saab Erekat, chief Palestinian negotiator, tagged Sharon’s comment as reflecting “a gangster mentality.”

**Sensible attitude**—A national poll

indicated that half those surveyed were as concerned about the attacks on civil liberties as on threats of terrorism. In California, a majority expressed greater concern about liberties.

**A modest example**—Former State Dept. counterterrorism director Lawrence Johnson, now a consultant to the federal government, says he advises investigators to begin monitoring university-affiliated groups, telephone calls, bank accounts, and fund-raising, according to the California’s *Oakland Tribune*.

**The ‘American Way’**—In Anchorage, Alaska, a trial is under way for Michael Mahaad, an Arab-

American who runs a printshop there. He was a target of vandalism. Printing equipment was smashed and a sign painted on the wall: “We hate Arabs.” Allegedly probing the vandalism, the cops said they found that Mahaad’s books included falsified documents and arrested him. No one has been charged in the vandalism.

**Enronitis**—Burlington Industries in Greensboro, North Carolina, is in the bankruptcy mill. The 4,000 textile workers face loss of jobs with half the severance pay they would have received before the bankruptcy process began. Meanwhile, it appears that company executives will walk off with bonuses ranging up to 200 percent.

**Anything but money**—The majority of United Kingdom offices are dull, cramped, and lacking in amenities. The depressing atmosphere imposes a damper on productivity. But, reports the *Times* of London, some firms “trying to improve the working environment and boost productivity, have introduced sauna meeting rooms, deck chairs, and special smells and music to the office.”

**Some revision needed?**—A budget chop at the South Carolina mental hospital meant that 163 staff members would be demoted or fired. Of these, 70 percent are Black workers, hired under a recent affirmative action program

that provides some jobs, but under the venerable dictum, “Last hired, first fired.” It points up the need for a revision of seniority-based layoffs to correct a glaring injustice.

**Finally, a roof over their head**—What with a tight budget, Polk County, Iowa, will no longer bury the deceased of a poor family without the money to do so. Only the homeless with no relatives will be interred.

**Not to mention union, union wages**—“Free health exams due crew doing [trade center] site cleanup—Immigrant day laborers may lack health insurance.”—Headline, San Diego *Union*.”

# ‘Democracy was killed with Patrice Lumumba’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

“Saying sorry doesn’t help,” said the Democratic Republic of Congo’s information minister Kikaya Bin Karubi in response to a Belgian government apology for its role in the 1961 assassination of Patrice Lumumba. “We are looking to ask for some kind of reparations—not only for the family of Lumumba, but also for the Congolese people. Democracy was killed with Patrice Lumumba and as a result, we have suffered decades of misery in this country.”

The apology, expressing “profound and deepest regrets,” came February 6 after a two-year inquiry by the Belgian parliament into the role played by Belgium in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the first and only elected prime minister of the Congo.

Karubi added that the government of the Congo is asking “everyone else who was involved to do a similar investigation. I’m referring to the United Nations, United States, and Russia because this country was the theater of the Cold War and that’s what led to the assassination of our prime minister.”

The BBC reported that crowds gathered at the “standing parliament”—named because the area has become a gathering place for discussion and debate of politics—responded to newspaper articles reporting the Belgian apology.

“Up to now they have not given us any good reasons for the assassination,” said 19-year-old Ben Kabeia. “We must know the true reasons for the assassination.”

A man born in 1935 said he remembers when Lumumba was killed. Recalling life under the Belgian colonizers, he told the BBC reporter that “we needed special permits to stay in this district at night. And the Belgians were very harsh with their workers. They used to whip us badly. The assassination of Lumumba was just another sad event on the list.”

The BBC report said many involved in the discussion “blame Belgium and other western powers not only for Lumumba’s assassination, but also for the backing given for 32 years to the former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, who succeeded Patrice Lumumba.”

After more than 80 years of colonial rule and plunder by Belgium, the people of the Republic of the Congo achieved political independence in June 1960 with 35-year-old Lumumba, the central leader of this fight,

becoming the nation’s first prime minister.

## Imperialist intervention

Within a month Brussels had built up a force of more than 10,000 troops in Katanga to protect the pro-imperialist forces seeking to separate this province from the Congo. Making their intentions crystal clear, the Belgian minister for Africa, Harold Aspremont Lynden, declared in an October 1960 document that “the main objective to pursue, in the interests of the Congo, Katanga, and Belgium is clearly the final elimination of Lumumba.”

U.S. imperialism, for its part, backed the dispatch of thousands of UN troops to occupy the very provinces controlled by the Lumumba government, a step initially requested by the Congolese prime minister, but one that opened up greater opportunities for direct intervention by the U.S. imperialists in the Congo.

At a National Security Council meeting on July 21, 1960, CIA director Allen Dulles described Lumumba as “a Castro or worse.” The following month Dulles sent a cable to the CIA station chief in Leopoldville insisting that Lumumba’s “removal must be an urgent and prime objective and that under existing conditions this should be a high priority of our covert action.”

According to a U.S. Senate report, the CIA in September 1960 sent one of its scientists to the Congo carrying by diplomatic pouch a “lethal biological material” (a virus) specifically intended for use in Lumumba’s assassination. But after Lumumba was taken prisoner, he was sent into enemy territory in Katanga where he was assaulted, tortured, and shot by an execution squad supervised by a Belgian captain.

One reflection of the honor in which the slain revolutionary leader is held in the country is the recent unveiling of a statue of Lumumba in the capital Kinshasa.

The Belgian inquest into the assassination was begun in 1999 following the publication of *The Murder of Lumumba* by Ludo de Witte. The book documented the role of Belgian government officials—under cover of UN “peacekeeping” troops sent to the Congo and in collaboration with Washington—in the murder of Lumumba.

The commission completed its work last November, concluding that former Belgian ministers bear a “moral responsibility” for

Lumumba’s death, that the government and Belgium’s late King Baudouin knew of plans to kill Lumumba, but that there was no evidence that Belgium officials directly ordered his assassination.

“Some members of the government and some Belgian actors at the time, bear an irrefutable part of the responsibility for the events that led to Patrice Lumumba’s death,” stated Foreign Minister Louis Michel, adding that the Belgium government demonstrated “apathy” and “cold indifference” towards Lumumba. Michel also announced that Belgium would contribute some \$3 million to create a Patrice Lumumba foundation, supposedly to promote democracy in the Congo, and would contribute annually \$500,000 to the fund.



**Patrice Lumumba, prime minister of newly independent Republic of the Congo, speaking at the United Nations, July 25, 1960. “Democracy was killed with Lumumba and as a result we have suffered decades of misery,” said Congolese government minister upon hearing of Belgian rulers’ belated apology for its role in assassinating Lumumba.**

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS  
**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

**February 25, 1977**

Did the agents watch from parked cars or shaded doorways? Or did they just wait for a police dispatch?

The FBI documents don’t tell.

The September 6, 1969, teletype from the New York FBI reports only the results of the stake-out: “four girls” departed in a Volkswagen for the women’s protest outside the Miss America pageant.

In the following years the agents stop calling women girls. But the 1,377 pages of FBI files on the women’s movement released this month under a Freedom of Information Act request show that the government did not give up its contempt for women or its crusade against women’s rights.

The files show that every woman who wanted equal rights, who went to consciousness-raising “rap” groups, public meetings, picket lines, speakouts, conferences, demonstrations, or women’s art fairs—all these women were targets of FBI surveillance and action.

When women’s liberation swept the country in the late 1960s, the FBI didn’t know what to make of it.

J. Edgar Hoover sent out the order: find who is behind this conspiracy. Find the group called “Women’s Liberation Movement” (WLM in the FBI files) and its officers. Around the country agents scurried to find the WLM headquarters. The Chicago FBI office sent back a bewildered reply: “[blank space] had no information concerning a group or organization called ‘Women’s Liberation Movement.’”

The report added, “It would seem that an abortive attempt may have been made to organize or affiliate all women into an organization but it never materialized.”

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
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**February 25, 1952**

New testimony on the frightful cost of U.S. “liberation” to Korea and the Koreans is given by Reginald Thompson, formerly Korean war correspondent for the *London Daily Telegraph*, conservative paper.

Thompson points out that the U.S. was able to bring to bear on Korea a tremendous force of air and sea power, as well as tanks and heavy artillery, that was able to operate almost at will and without interference. “Never could modern weapons and ‘total interdiction’ have a better chance to prove themselves,” says Thompson.

Thompson personally observed the results of the U.S. policy. “On each and every occasion, advance was preceded by air and artillery attack on a very heavy scale, quite out of proportion to the resistance, real or imaginary. It became apparent from the outset that the purpose was to win by these methods alone; to obliterate the enemy.”

But the “enemy”—that is the north Korean troops—were not obliterated and continued to fight. “In short, little had been achieved beyond the destruction of civilians lives and property.”

From this observation of the unspeakable atrocities committed in Korea by U.S. imperialism, Thompson draws a general observation:

“Thus in Korea we see the new trend and pattern of warfare for the first time. In the 1914–18 war civilians were included. In the 1939–45 war civilians became equal targets with soldiers. Today civilians have become the main target. That is the meaning of ‘total interdiction’ and the atom bomb carries it to its conclusion.”

## REVOLUTION in the CONGO

**By Dick Roberts**

Describes the struggle against Belgian colonial rule, the 1960 independence victory of the Congolese workers and farmers under the leadership of Patrice Lumumba, the role, under UN cover, of Washington and other imperialist powers in the overthrow and assassination of Lumumba, and the continuing freedom struggles there in the early 1960s.

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## Two Speeches by Malcolm X

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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or at [pathfinderpress.com](http://pathfinderpress.com).

# U.S. hands off Iraq, Iran, Korea

All working people should oppose the saber-rattling by President George Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and other top U.S. government officials who have called for toppling the government of Iraq. Bush's state of the union address and subsequent speeches are aimed at preparing working people in the United States for another imperialist war against a semicolonial country. In this case, they are aiming their threats at a people that has faced more than a decade of economic embargo, bombings and invasion, and death through devastation of the basic infrastructure of the country at the hands of the U.S. and British armed forces.

In the weeks and months ahead U.S. imperialism will be working to create another pretext to press toward its goal of removing the regime of Saddam Hussein and replacing it with a protectorate. But as Cuba's permanent representative to the United Nations, Ricardo Alarcón, asked in a speech to the UN Security Council on Aug. 6, 1990, as Washington began to gear up its war machine: "Is the defense of the legitimate interests of the Kuwaiti government really the concern that has led the United States delegation to act as it is doing now, or is it the ambition of the United States to intervene in and dominate the Middle East?"

Today, however, the bipartisan campaign to demonize the governments of Iran, Iraq, and north Korea has run into resistance. Millions of people poured into the streets throughout Iran to denounce the U.S. rulers' threats against their country and demonstrate their determination to defend the gains of their 23-year-old revolution. Workers and peasants in north Korea will never forgive the brutalities meted out by U.S. and Japanese imperialism and are determined to defend their homeland and join their brothers and sisters in the south to fight for reunification. Filipinos have held almost daily demonstrations opposing U.S. special forces troops who are already carrying out commando operations on their land.

The rulers' campaign against "terror" is also wearing

thin at home. Without American troops being killed in combat and body bags coming home, the rulers are running into problems trying to whip up the kind of war fever they need to attempt to qualitatively deepen their assault on workers' rights and deal blows to the labor movement in the United States. More workers are standing up to firings and other victimizations resulting from their political beliefs, nationality, or religion.

Working people are also refusing to postpone their struggles "in the interests of national unity." Machinists and aircraft cleaners representing some 13,000 workers at United Airlines have rejected the company's proposed contract and voted to strike if a better deal is not put on the table. Protests continue in Miami against near-weekly cop killings of Blacks and other working people. Coal miners and widows are mobilizing against attacks by coal operators and the government on black lung compensation.

The grinding effects of capitalism in its decline are setting workers and peasants into motion throughout most of the world. Sometimes these defensive actions against assaults on their conditions of life and work portend greater social explosions, like the recent round of protests and strikes in Argentina. Groupings of workers, peasants, and students who are trying to figure out how to most effectively defend their interests are forming in both imperialist and semicolonial countries. And the United States is no exception.

These expanding openings offer opportunities for communists to meet up with and win proletarian fighters to the communist movement. Out of the turmoil, wars, social catastrophes, and dislocation that capitalism brings forth in its decline are coming the very forces capable of building revolutionary working-class parties and of leading the struggles to take power out of the hands of the wealthy ruling families, overthrow capitalism, and join the worldwide fight for socialism.

# Free the Cuban revolutionaries

The U.S. government took another step last week to try to break five Cuban revolutionaries, who—despite being imprisoned for three years, more than half in solitary confinement, facing a frame-up trial and sentences of up to life in prison, and a campaign to vilify them in the press—remain unwavering in their determination to defend their country.

Dividing up political prisoners and sending them to separate jails as Washington has now done is something that even many dictatorships and repressive regimes have not imposed on those they have thrown in prison for political reasons. The decision serves as a reminder of what imperialist democracy is all about and of the future the superwealthy rulers have in store for all working people—if they get their way.

It can also serve as an opportunity to widen the support for the five, and others Washington has incarcerated on charges of spying for Cuba, such as Ana Belen Montes. The issues in this fight are of broad concern to working people, who more and more face similar assaults by the employers and their government. By explaining the facts of the case on the job, among those joining social protest actions and strike picket lines, and to students, supporters of the five Cubans can respond effectively to Washington's assault.

Working people in the United States have an important stake in demanding that the frame-up convictions of five Cuban citizens in a U.S. court be thrown out. The trial was a miscarriage of justice.

The five Cubans and the Cuban government acknowledge they were collecting information on rightist and terrorist groups who, with the complicity of Washington, are responsible for attacks and provocations against Cuba. The Cuban revolutionary government has made it clear it will not stand by while these outfits plan, organize, and launch assaults against their country. The defendants and their lawyers did an effective job of exposing the extent and character of these actions through court testimony.

The U.S. ruling class, with its four-decade-long bipartisan policies against the Cuban Revolution, is responsible for creating the rightist outfits that operate on U.S. territory and carry out attacks against the island. These terrorist groups have been one aspect of Washington's wide-ranging war against the Cuban Revolution, which has included a mercenary invasion, war threats, an ongoing economic embargo, a drive to politically isolate the country in the world, and assassination attempts on government leaders. The U.S. government also maintains a travel ban that denies the right of most U.S. residents to visit Cuba.

These convictions and sentences are an attack directed not only at revolutionary Cuba but at workers' rights in

the United States. FBI agents broke into the Cubans' homes repeatedly over the three years prior to the arrests, violating the Fourth Amendment protection against arbitrary search and seizure. The prosecution's "evidence" consisted of information the FBI claimed to have collected in these raids, and from short-wave radio transmissions government agents asserted they intercepted between Havana and the defendants. The judge refused a defense motion to move the trial out of Miami, even after several potential jurors, particularly Cuban-Americans, disqualified themselves for fear of reprisals if they voted "not guilty." No evidence of any military secrets being stolen from the United States and turned over to Cuba was ever presented by the prosecution.

As with Washington's attacks on workers' rights under the guise of fighting terrorism since September 11, and the interrelated humiliating treatment of the Taliban and other prisoners held by the U.S. Government in Guantánamo, Cuba, the U.S. rulers have used the "spy scare" case against the five Cuban revolutionaries as a means to justify broader powers for the FBI. Such moves have included sanctioning break-ins and electronic eavesdropping, frame-up trials on scanty evidence, and harsh prison conditions, including extended solitary confinement based solely on the character of the charges against the defendants.

The frame-up trial and trampling of justice in the federal court in Miami is not an aberration—it is how imperialist justice works in the USA. It is the same as the supposedly airtight case Washington had assembled against Lotfi Raissi, an Algerian pilot imprisoned for five months in a maximum security prison in London because Washington asserted it had incontrovertible evidence that he was part of the plot to target the World Trade Center on September 11. Raissi was freed on bail this week after Washington's case collapsed. Frame-ups of fighting unionists such as the Charleston Five dockworkers who won their freedom as a result of an international campaign—that's how imperialist justice works.

The conditions of the transfer of the five Cubans to different jails reveal a further attempt by Washington to bring them to their knees and intimidate their supporters and all defenders of workers' rights and civil liberties. But as has repeatedly happened since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the five are showing Washington what a revolutionary people are made of.

The tenacious stand of the "young pines," as Víctor Dreke so eloquently describes them, provides an opportunity for all working people and youth who defend workers' rights and the Cuban Revolution to join in demanding the convictions of the five be thrown out and that they be freed from prison.

# Revolutionists oppose threats against Korea

**The following February 14 message is from Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes to Kim Jong Il, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea.**

The Socialist Workers Party sends revolutionary greetings to the Korean people on the occasion of your February 16 national holiday. From within the United States, we stand shoulder to shoulder with you as Washington steps up its arrogant slanders and threats of military strikes against your government and people, as well as against others George W. Bush defames as the "axis of evil"—the governments and people of Iran and Iraq.

We look forward to sending a leadership delegation from the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists to your country in April as part of our movement's response to Washington's bellicose actions and barrage of lies. Such a trip will expand our opportunities to bring the truth to workers, farmers, and youth in the United States about the Korean people's century-long resistance to imperialist domination and the bloody partition of your country. It will help us respond more effectively to the U.S. rulers' efforts to deny the Korean people and government your sovereign right to take the steps you deem necessary to defend your homeland and meet the energy needs essential to economic and social development.

With the events of September 11, the imperialist rulers, with Washington at the head of the pack, immediately pounced on the pretext of combating "terrorism" in order to implement measures they had been preparing for more than a decade. While the consequences of the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., did not give birth to a new world relationship of forces, as often claimed by apologists for the capitalist order, the imperialists' response *has* accelerated the dominant trends in world politics and exacerbated class contradictions, long developing, at home and abroad.

Within hours the U.S. rulers had decided on their war to impose a new imperial protectorate on Afghanistan. They have strengthened the foothold of U.S. military power and political dominance from India and Pakistan, to the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, and beyond. Washington is turning Guantánamo—its ill-gotten armed outpost on the sovereign soil of Cuba—into a brutal concentration camp. It is pushing to regain military outposts in Southeast Asia by sending troops to the Philippines and pressuring the Vietnamese government to open up its deep-water port at Cam Ranh Bay for the use of the U.S. imperial Navy.

Within the U.S., Washington's bipartisan government has come together to advance plans laid long ago to establish a North American "homeland" military command, military tribunals to ride roughshod over protections guaranteed by the Constitution's Bill of Rights, a national identity card, and other repressive measures. The rulers often take aim first at immigrant workers as they prepare their salvos against wider and wider layers of working people.

America's wealthiest families hoped the destruction rained down on Afghanistan and the technical proficiency of the Pentagon's killing apparatus would make the toilers of the world drop to their knees in fear. But from Iran to Palestine, from Argentina to Korea, working people are refusing to do just that.

In the United States, new generations of working-class militants are gaining class-struggle experience, from airport workers protesting mass firings in California; to illegally terminated packinghouse workers in Illinois, carrying signs in English, Spanish, and Polish on picket lines in front of the plant, demanding pay and benefits denied them; to Haitians in New York rallying against yet another police killing.

The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists will continue to join with your government and party, workers and farmers in Korea, and others who demand: End the threats against north Korea! Support the Korean people's fight for national reunification! Get all U.S. troops out of Korea now!

# U.S widens military support to Colombia

**Continued from Page 5**

The Bush administration is now seeking congressional approval for another \$1 billion for military training and equipment.

U.S. government officials say the new pipeline brigades will eventually be extended to protect other vital infrastructure. "Security is the biggest constraint to American foreign investment in Colombia," said Anne Patterson, U.S. ambassador to Colombia. Patterson told newspapers in Colombian that after September 11 the security of oil resources has become a priority for the U.S. government.

Washington plans to use Army Special Forces from the 7th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, for the training of the new army brigade and has claimed it will keep the U.S. "advisors" out of combat.



# Engels's role in elaborating dialectical materialism

Printed below is an excerpt from *Polemics in Marxist Philosophy* by George Novack. This is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for February. The item quoted comes from the chapter titled "In Defense of Engels." Copyright © 1978 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY GEORGE NOVACK

I will focus upon Frederick Engels and his contributions to the elaboration of dialectical materialism, for the following reason. The cocreator of scientific socialism has come under heavy fire in recent years on the ground that he switched Karl Marx's thought onto the wrong track and distorted his teachings on philosophy. Just as Leon Trotsky is portrayed by the Stalinists as the antagonist of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin after 1917, so Engels is separated by his detractors from Marx and depreciated in a like manner on the philosophic front. He is accused of deforming Marx's method in a mechanistic way, thereby being the progeni-

tor of Social Democratic deviations and Stalinist dogmatism....

The false antithesis between Marx and Engels contradicts the basic facts about their relationship. It is, bluntly speaking, a hoax; and serious socialists should beware of being taken in by it. When Engels first visited Marx in Paris in the summer of 1844, he later wrote: "We found that we were in complete accord in all theoretical domains; this was when our joint work began." It continued without letup until Marx died in 1883.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

History has rarely witnessed so close, harmonious, and unabated an intellectual and political partnership. Their correspondence testifies to the communion of thought and lively interchange of ideas on a multitude of subjects that found expression in

their writings. Although Engels modestly assigned himself the role of "second fiddle" to Marx, the development of the dialectical method and historical materialism was a collective creation. Engels and George Plekhanov later named the synthesis dialectical materialism. Marx and Engels elaborated its fundamental principles together in the 1840s. Most of what they wrote thereafter, whether in the form of newspaper articles, manifestos, pamphlets, or books, was either discussed beforehand or submitted to each other's searching critical scrutiny.

Whatever differences of opinion they had on this or that minor matter, there is no record of disagreement on any important theoretical or political question during their forty-year collaboration. Engels was so familiar with Marx's criticism of political economy that he alone could be entrusted with piecing together and putting into publishable shape the second and third volumes of *Capital*.

*Anti-Dühring*, by Engels, was the fullest exposition of Marxist philosophy issued while Marx was alive. It was a preliminary sketch for *Dialectics of Nature* and shares the same theoretical viewpoint. *Anti-Dühring* was undertaken on Marx's insistence. He endorsed every word in the book, which Engels read to him before sending it to the printers. Chapter 10 of part II was written by Marx. Therefore any dissent from the ideas presented in its pages is ipso facto a disagreement with Marx as much as Engels. The latter made this clear when he wrote in the preface to its second edition: "I must note in passing that inasmuch as the mode of outlook expounded in this book was founded and developed in far greater measure by Marx, and only in an insignificant degree by myself, it was self-understood between us that this exposition of mine should not be issued without his knowledge." Engels likewise noted in the preface to the first edition of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* that he had drawn extensively upon Marx's prolific observations and conclusions in writing that book.

Long after their deaths, the mythmakers are attempting to do what was impossible



Karl Marx (holding paper) and Frederick Engels review issue of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* as it comes off the press in 1848. The two revolutionists worked together for a lifetime in development of dialectical method and historical materialism.

during their lifetimes—pit the one revolutionist against the other. This gambit is not new. In a letter to Eduard Bernstein, written April 23, 1883, shortly after Marx's death, Engels said: "The fable about the nasty Engels who had led the benign Marx astray has been repeated many times since 1844...."

After settling their basic philosophical principles in their own minds, Marx and Engels divided the tasks at hand in the exposition of their common ideas. While Marx immersed himself in the prodigious labor of investigating the problems of political economy, Engels undertook to popularize their philosophic positions. The most important of these works were *Anti-Dühring*, from which *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* was extracted, and later *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*. These were to be crowned by *Dialectics of Nature*, which remained unfinished at his death. In addition to *Capital*, which stands as the supreme example of the application of their method, these classical writings are the prime sources for our knowledge about Marxist philosophy.

they effected in philosophy was to fuse these two disconnected elements into a synthetic world outlook that posed the necessity for the working class to transform society and offered a theoretical guide for this emancipation struggle. Materialism was extended from natural to social phenomena and to the development of the thought process; the idealist dialectic of Hegel was turned upside down and given a solid scientific basis in the realities of the universal evolution of matter in motion.

Marxism redefined and revitalized philosophy by linking it with the class struggle and political activity, by converting it into an instrument to be added to the arsenal of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle to change the world through class action, and by absorbing the results of the growing scientific knowledge about nature, history, and the mind into its principles.

The unfounded allegation that Marx and Engels held divergent philosophical views sets up Engels as a whipping boy for Marx himself. The objections raised against his positions are actually aimed against the tenets of the dialectical materialism they held in common. The detractors ought to come out from ambush and challenge Marx fairly and squarely.

<sup>1</sup>Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring: Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (Moscow: Foreign Languages, 1954), p. 14.

### Materialist conception of the world

From the inventory of previous philosophizing, Marx and Engels retained the materialist conception of the world and dialectical logic, making these acquisitions the cornerstones of their systematic thought. The distinctive character of the revolution

## LETTERS

### Support to Sinn Fein?

I think it is time—actually past time—for revolutionary socialists to reconsider any support they may have given Sinn Fein. It was noticeable that when Gerry Adams appeared in New York during the World Economic Forum last weekend, it was not to join the anticapitalist protesters, but to hold discussion with the representatives of big capital!

And he had to sneak out of an engagement commemorating Bloody Sunday in order to turn in an appearance with the Bill Gateses of the world. Sinn Fein seems to be going the way of the ANC—toward supporting neoliberal policies, and currying favor with the "owners of the world."

Josh Fritz  
Chicago, Illinois

### Bolivians fight Bechtel

As participants at the recent World Economic Forum debated the merits of imperialism donning a kinder, gentler face, residents of Cochabamba, Bolivia, have been involved in a debate of their own with the Bechtel Corporation of San Francisco. Bechtel is demanding compensation from the government of Bolivia for canceling a water contract with Cochabamba, the country's third largest city.

The Bolivian government, under pressure from the World Bank, privatized the water system of Cochabamba, giving sole rights to a Bechtel subsidiary. Water bills for most residents jumped an average of 200 percent. Working people took to the streets, and at one protest, a 17 year old was shot dead by soldiers and hundreds were injured.

The actions forced the government to suspend the contract. Bechtel has filed a claim with an arbitration board of the World Bank. At an April 2000 press conference the World Bank's president said, "The biggest problem with water is the waste of water through lack of charging."

Shirley Peña  
Albany, California

### Coverage on Korea

Thank you for the continued coverage which begins to demystify all the misinformation pertaining to Korea disseminated by the mainstream media. A book by Martin Hart Landberg on Korea, *Division, Reunification, and U.S. Foreign Policy*, is a useful source and helps expose the real history of U.S. Korea relations.

President Bush denounced the North Korean government because of all the people who experience hunger in that nation. Well, right here in the United States over 30 million people experience hunger and no one argues that a shortage of food exists in this country.

Steve Halpern  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Letters can be submitted at [themilitant.com](http://themilitant.com), sent to [themilitant@compuserve.com](mailto:themilitant@compuserve.com), or to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## February BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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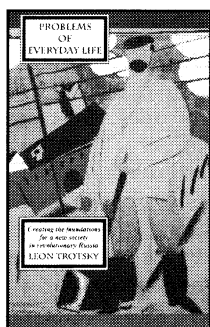
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GEORGE NOVACK

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## Teachers in Canada oppose cutbacks

BY BEVERLY BROWN

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—The fight against government austerity measures spread beyond this province last week when 14,000 teachers went on strike in Alberta February 4. Two days later thousands of students across Canada held a one-day action to protest rising college tuition fees.

The mobilizations come in the wake of weeks of rallies, strikes, and marches by working people in British Columbia (B.C.) held to condemn attacks on public workers unions and budget cutbacks in health and education. This week members of the Hospital Employees Union (HEU) continued their actions in at least 60 locations against attacks on health care and their union in B.C., despite the Labour Relations Board ruling illegal a five-hour strike planned by the union.

The B.C. Federation of Labour (BCFL) and the B.C. Health Coalition are organizing a mass rally February 23 at the provincial legislature in Victoria—four days after the Liberal government of Gordon Campbell presents its budget which is expected to contain further attacks on social services.

Indicating the direction the Canadian rulers want to push in attacking health care for working people, Roy Romanow, former New Democratic Party (NDP) premier of Saskatchewan and now head of a federal commission on health care, said February 7 that among the alternatives that the commission is considering are “charging co-payments or user fees” and “more private-sector participation” in the health-care industry.

The B.C. provincial government, headed by the Liberal Party, has announced it will impose a 50 percent hike on health-care premiums May 1. Finance Minister Gary Collins added that health-care premiums may have to go up by 60 percent to 70 percent, blaming a 11.3 percent pay raise granted doctors by an arbitration panel for the additional increase.

### Teachers strike in Alberta

Members of the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) went on strike to win wage increases, including big hikes for new teachers. The strike affects about half the student population in the province. Another 1,000 teachers may begin strike action February 11.

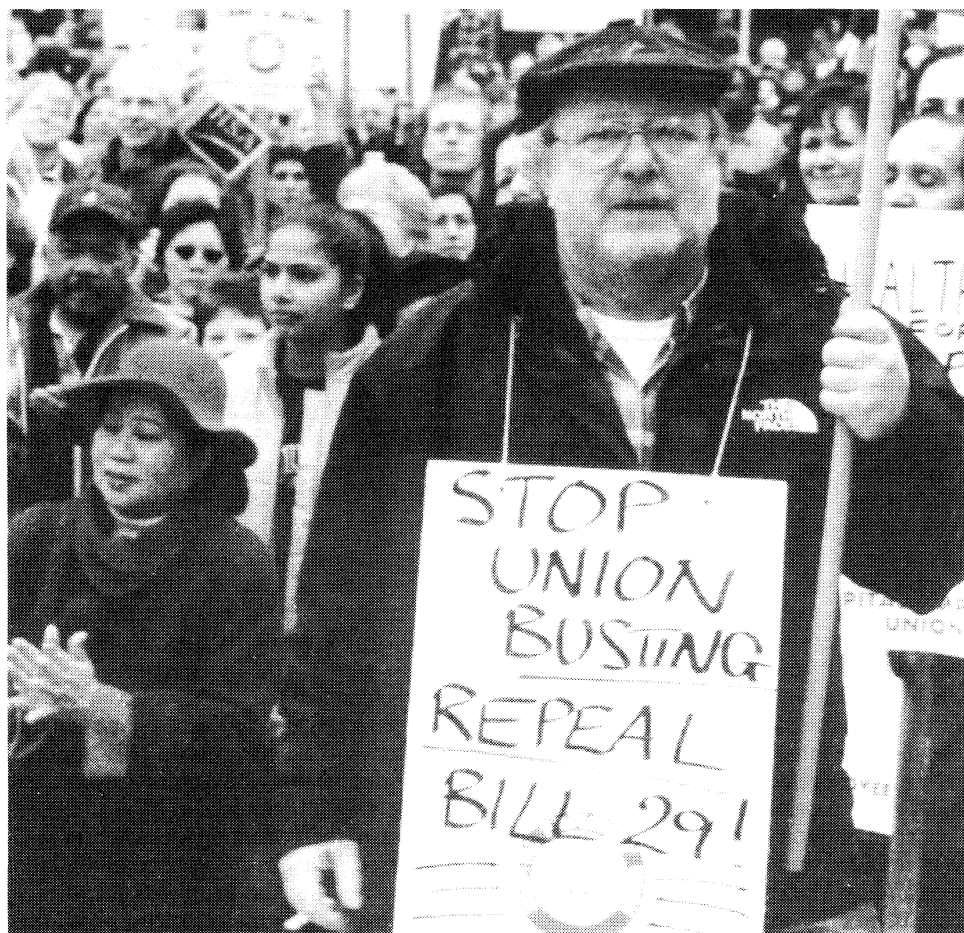
Another demand of the teachers is for a reduction in class sizes in the early grades. One recent survey found that 41 percent of Alberta's elementary classrooms have 25 or more students. Over 620 elementary classrooms have 30 or more students. Junior and senior high classrooms are larger, giving Alberta the highest student-teacher ratio in the country. Since teachers are fighting to improve education, they have won support from both students and parents.

On February 8, 4,000 angry teachers, students, and parents rallied at the provincial legislature in Edmonton to demand more government funding for education. “Our fight is with the people in this building who have refused the proper funding for education, and they need to hear that message,” ATA president Larry Booi told the crowd.

Teachers are holding a similar rally in Calgary February 11, where Catholic school teachers are already on strike and 6,000 public school teachers will vote the next day on strike action. Lyle Oberg, Alberta's education minister, has threatened to legislate teachers back to work within two weeks.

The decision of the B.C. provincial government to impose a contract on 45,000 teachers led to rallies, meetings, and marches by 35,000 teachers from one end of the province to the other January 28. In several school districts 100 percent of the members of the British Columbia Federation of Teachers (BCTF) participated in these actions. In many regions, members of other unions attended as well.

After imposing the settlement on B.C. teachers, the provincial government announced it would not provide full funding for the raises it legislated. Now, as the BCTF had been warning, local school boards may enlarge class sizes and hire fewer specialty teachers such as librarians, special-needs



Militant/Monica Jones

### Hospital Employees Union members rally February 2 in Vancouver

experts, and ESL teachers. Many teachers are continuing to refuse to perform extra-curricular activities.

In addition to the protest actions by hospital workers, there are almost daily news reports of demonstrations being organized by local groups against the Campbell government's cuts.

Over the last decade university fees have

gone up by as much as 150 percent in Ontario, Nova Scotia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. The cost of an undergraduate arts degree in Nova Scotia, for example, jumped to \$4,732 in 2001 from \$2,201 in 1991. In Ontario, the same program cost \$4,062 in 2001, up from \$1,785 in 1991. After four years of university, the average student graduates with \$25,000 of debt.

On February 6, thousands of post-secondary students in at least 25 cities across Canada participated in a national day of protest called by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). Actions also took place in Montreal and St. Jean in Quebec where tuition fees are the lowest in Canada as a result of struggles to improve the education system having been part of the battle against the national oppression of the Quebecois. According to the CFS, several studies in the last 18 months show that “participation rates in college and university for low and middle-income families are down sharply.”

### Students occupy bank

In Halifax, about 200 students occupied the largest branch of the Royal Bank—a focus of anger because it oversees Nova Scotia's student loans program. In Ontario, 4,000 students rallied at Queen's Park in Toronto to demand that the government halt tuition increases. More than 1,000 demonstrated in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In Victoria, 2,000 students marched in the rain to the provincial legislature. The Liberal government is expected to announce an increase in tuition fees that have been frozen in B.C. since 1995. After the rally, some students pitched tents on the lawn in front of the legislature to continue their protest against tuition fee hikes and recent cuts by the Campbell government to welfare and Pharmacare.

“I don't want to be arrested, but I will make that decision when it comes,” University of Victoria graduate student Melissa Moroz told the *Victoria Times Colonist*. “I've written a lot of letters and it doesn't seem to do anything.” Now christened Camp Campbell, the tents are expected to stay up until after the February 23 rally sponsored by the B.C. Federation of Labour.

Beverly Brown works as a meat packer.

## Auto workers in Wales rally for union rights

BY XERARDO ARIAS AND JOYCE FAIRCHILD

CARDIFF, Wales—As Labour prime minister Anthony Blair was attending a Labour Party Conference here, 200 supporters of the fight of workers sacked (fired) by the auto parts company Friction Dynamics rallied elsewhere in the Welsh capital in defense of their union.

Gerald Parry, a representative of members of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) at the company, told the rally about the 10-month fight against the union-busting drive of Friction Dynamics owner Craig Smith. “We're not out for more money or better conditions, but to defend our right to our union,” he said, listing Smith's drive to erode working conditions and cut pay by 15 percent.

In response to a brief walkout by workers last April in protest of his attacks, Smith locked out the union members. He then sacked all the workers on strike after letting enough time elapse to get out from under a clause in the national employment act. The bill states the workers cannot be sacked during the first eight weeks of a dispute.

Workers hired by Smith since the lock-out report they too have faced pay reductions and poor working conditions, with accidents commonplace.

It was recently revealed that Smith's insurance on the factory no longer covers these workers, putting the company in serious breach of the law.

TGWU members involved in the fight are demanding the government change the legislation to prevent companies from sacking any worker during an industrial dispute.

In his speech to the rally, Gerald Parry said the Labour Party “was formed 100 years ago for many reasons; one of the reasons it wasn't formed was to defend the likes of people like Craig Smith.” He added the union picket line “was not about money, but because he [Smith] was dismantling our

union.” Bill Morris, general secretary of the TGWU, also addressed the packed hall and expressed his support for the fight.

The union members and their families then led a 300-strong march to the Labour Party conference, where they sought to meet with Prime Minister Blair to discuss their situation.

On a recent trip to the picket line, cleaners from Lancaster Gate Cleaning company, who are themselves in dispute with their employer, interviewed the TGWU members

on videotape. The cleaners plan to send the tape to Ecuador, where one of their ranks had been active in a trade union.

“Prior to visiting the picket line I thought trade unions only existed in Ecuador and other countries in Latin America,” the cleaner said. “Now I realize there are trade unionists living and fighting in Britain and other countries in Europe.”

Xerardo Arias is a member of the Young Socialists.

## Thousands of farmers in Greece conduct protests for second week

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—For a second week in a row, farmers here have organized tractorades, rallies, and roadblocks across the country. Thousands of working farmers began protests January 28 over cuts in price subsidies, low prices, and production ceilings.

They are also demanding emergency government relief for crop damage caused by a severe snowstorm last month, opposing plans to sell off the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE), and pressing for debt relief and substantially higher pensions.

Prior to a meeting with the minister of agriculture on February 5, farmers thought they had won some of their demands. The ministry had indicated that it would set up a disaster relief fund and increase prices for cotton to a level that would have gone some way to meeting cotton farmers' demands.

At the meeting, however, the government confirmed the emergency relief fund but refused to set a price for cotton, claiming that it had to make sure there was no over-production.

“The government did not give us any-

thing,” said Christos Benekis, a cotton farmer from Thessaly, in a phone interview. He said farmers set out at the beginning of the mobilizations to eliminate fines for over-production for small farmers. “This is a way to protect the small farmers,” he said, “the ones in most need.”

This view is not shared by the employers. Vassilis Markou, the manager of a cotton plant, told the *Athens News* that the “market has become very competitive.... A lone farmer cannot make enough to support his family.” Markou added, “Things have to be done on a big scale to make a profit. That's capitalism.”

Following the meeting with the government, farmers drove hundreds of tractors to close off the highway to Thessaloniki and the Tembi Pass for periods of time. Hundreds of others also closed off border crossings in the north of the country and continued their presence at the Thessaloniki Airport road. Daily closings ranging from a few minutes to a few hours occurred until February 9 when leaders of farm organizations called off the actions, saying they will call a demonstration in Athens later this month.